Tuesday 3 June 2025

Amateur Photographer

Nikon Coolpix P1100

A **28-3000mm equivalent** 125x zoom and 7fps shooting for £1050! Too good to be true?

PREMIUM EDITION

JUNE 2025

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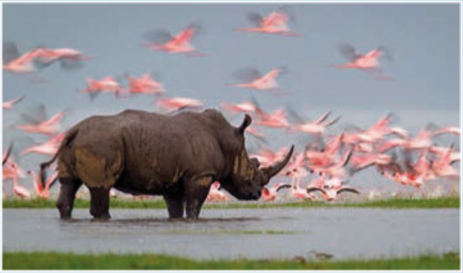
Wildlife special



Remember wildlife

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Brent Stirton

His latest project on Amboseli

Funny animals

Celebrating 10 years of the Nikon Comedy Wildlife Awards

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The longest FE lens available

Sigma 300-600 F4 DG OS

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Not just a regular monopod

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Fujifilm X half

Digital half-frame!

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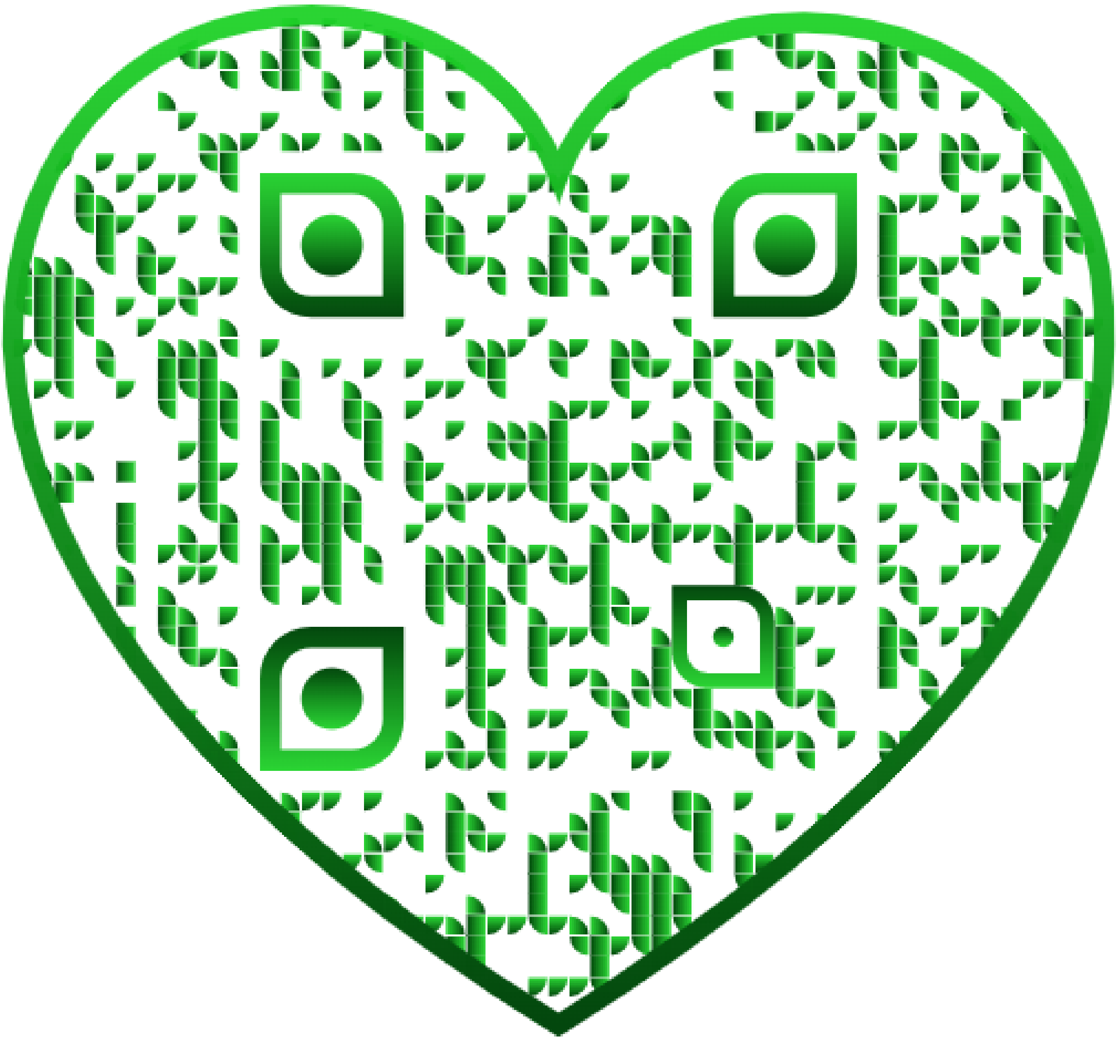
KELSEY media

Federico Veronesi

A lifelong love of elephants

Plus Dudley Edmondson: challenging wildlife stereotypes • Best wildlife books



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© FEDERICO VERONESI

© DUDLEY EDMONDSON

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Welcome

Professional wildlife photography has changed a lot in the past few years. It's now less about just taking pretty pictures of pretty animals and has become more of a campaigning, conservation mission to save them from extinction. And that is reflected in many of the stories we share this issue. But it isn't all doom and gloom, as we enjoy a selection from the Nikon Comedy Wildlife Awards, and Federico Veronesi's dramatic photos of elephants. We also test a variety of products of interest to the wildlife enthusiast, including two big telephoto zoom lenses from Sigma and Sony, a Nikon bridge camera with a whopping 3000mm (equiv) reach, and a clever monopod with a difference. Enjoy!

Nigel Atherton, Editor

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Plus Dudley Edmondson: challenging wildlife stereotypes • Best wildlife books

COVER PICTURE © FEDERICO VERONESI. INSET, RHINO : © ISAK PRETORIUS / TAKEN FROM *REMEMBERING RHINOS*. INSET, SQUIRREL: © MILKO MARCHETTI / NIKON COMEDY WILDLIFE AWARDS

Our main cover image this week is by Federico Veronesi. Read our interview with him on page 68

THIS ISSUE'S CONTRIBUTORS

GRAEME GREEN

The top photographer interviews Federico Veronesi and also interviews Dudley Edmondson

JADE BURRELL

Photo student Jade on Remembering Wildlife's tenth anniversary; and the Nikon Comedy Wildlife Awards

PETER DENCH
Acting Features Ed

Peter finds out more about Brent Stirton's Amboseli Under Threat project

ANDY WESTLAKE
Technical Editor

Andy takes a first look at the Fujifilm X half and tests the Sony 400-800mm for Sony E-mount

DAMIEN DEMOLDER

AP's former editor reviews new sports and wildlife zoom lens, the Sigma 300-600mm F4

AMY DAVIES
Features Editor

Amy tests Nikon's P1100, that has a 125x zoom lens and DSLR-like handling

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Fujifilm X half

If may look like a mini-X100, but Fujifilm's latest camera is an entirely different beast. **Andy Westlake** gets hands-on

At a glance

£699

- 3:4 vertical format shooting
- 32mm equivalent f/2.8 lens
- 17.7MP 1in sensor
- ISO 200-12,800
- 2.4in, 0.92m-dot screen
- Optical viewfinder
- Film camera mode

Colours

The X half comes in a choice of three colours: silver, charcoal, and black. I think the silver version is by far the nicest.

Flash

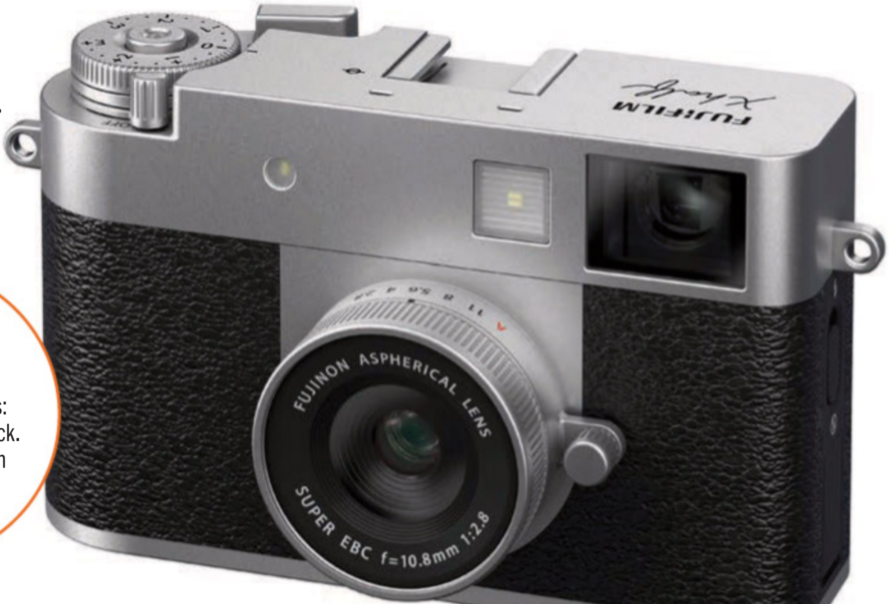
A small LED flash is built-in, and enabled via a sliding switch on the side.

Storage

Your photos and videos are stored on a full-size SD card.

Power

Fujifilm's familiar NP-W126 battery promises 880 shots per charge and is topped up via USB-C.

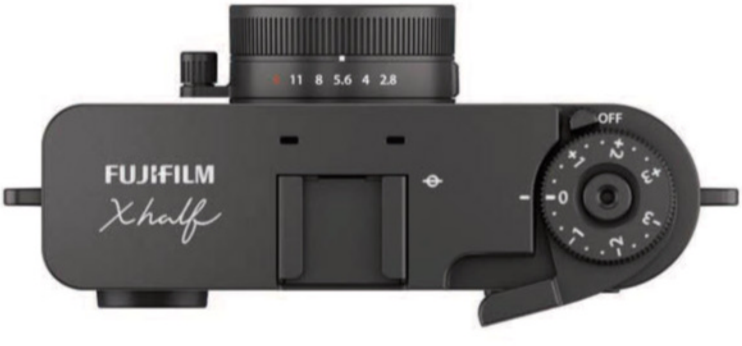


Despite a superficial resemblance, the X half is a very different camera to the X100VI

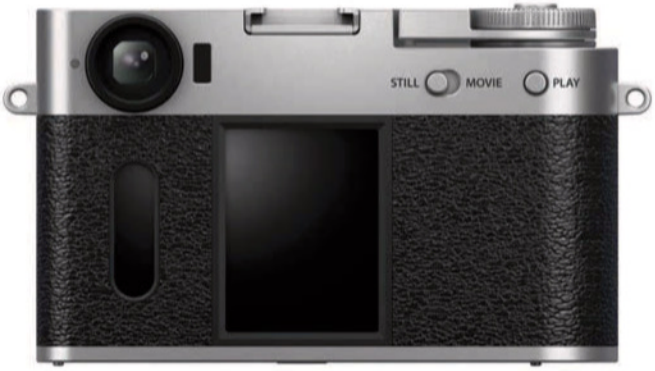
Fujifilm's latest camera, the X half, is a pocket-sized compact with a familiar-looking design. But let's get one thing straight from the start – if you're hoping for a more affordable version of the popular X100VI, then despite the family resemblance, that's not what you get. Instead, the X half is a dramatically different kind of camera that takes its inspiration from the experience of shooting film, and specifically half-frame 35mm.

In essence, the X half is a small, lightweight camera that's built around the idea of shooting everything in vertical format with a 3:4 aspect-ratio, primarily for sharing on social media. It only shoots photos in JPEG format, not raw, and it barely panders to video at all. This being Fujifilm, the firm's popular Film Simulations are very much to the fore, along with an array of creative filters and film effects such as 'light leak' and 'expired film'.

That vertical-format design means that the sensor, rear screen and optical viewfinder are all rotated through 90° compared to normal. The sensor itself is a conventional 20MP 1in-type chip, but cropped down to give 17.7MP output. Meanwhile the lens combines a 32mm equivalent view with an f/2.8 maximum aperture. But there's no stabilisation of any sort, and no filter thread either.



Key controls include an aperture ring, exposure compensation dial, and 'wind-on lever'. This picture shows the charcoal version



A second small touchscreen displays the Film Simulation mode

I got my hands on the X half briefly before its launch

The main screen is pretty small, at 2.4in and 0.92m-dot resolution, but it's complemented by a second slim vertical touchscreen that shows the film mode while shooting. Thirteen Film Simulations are onboard, giving a wide range of attractive colour looks, and you can select between them simply by swiping up or down.

Pocket-sized

Probably the most striking thing about the X half is its tiny size, at just 106x64x46mm and 240g. That small body means there isn't space for much in the way of controls, although you do get arguably the two most important ones. An aperture ring on the lens offers settings from f/2.8 to f/11, while an exposure compensation dial on top covers a +/-3EV range. You also get a manual focus ring, although I'm not convinced anyone will ever use it.

The other major control resembles a film wind-on lever. This sits flush to the body when the camera is off, but flicking the power switch to On pushes it outwards, enabling operation by your right thumb. In normal shooting, this lever is used to create '2-in-1' diptychs. Take the first shot, pull the lever, and take the second, and the camera creates a side-by-side composite image (the two individual frames are stored alongside).

Set the X half to its 'film camera mode', and that lever becomes an even more significant part of the shooting experience. Select a number of shots – either 36, 54, or 72 – and press the onscreen 'start' button, and you have to take that many frames before you can 'develop' your photos and view them using the dedicated smartphone app. Oh, and you have to use that wind-on lever before you can take the next shot.

An optical viewfinder complements the LCD screen, although unfortunately, it's not great. It's rather small, shows obvious barrel distortion, and covers somewhat less than the final image area. There's no information display, just a status LED alongside that lights up to confirm focus. But I found this rather difficult to see in bright sunlight.

Autofocus employs a single, rather large zone in the middle of the frame. This feels suitably film-era and makes sense for viewfinder shooting, but it's rather crude compared to what we've become accustomed to. The only concession to modernity is a face detection option.

First impressions

The Fujifilm X half is an intriguing little camera that's quite unlike anything else on the market. I got to play with it for an hour or so before its official launch, and it's a lot of fun to use. Sample images show Fujifilm's usual lovely colour rendition, along with near-perfectly judged exposure and white balance.

You do need to accept, though, that it's not for enthusiasts who like tinkering with their exposure settings and perfecting their images in post-processing. Instead, it's a compact camera for the social media world, that offers much of the experience of shooting film but without the ongoing expense of processing. It has a real madcap charm, and I suspect it'll attract a significant following.

The new wireless shooting grip and remote commander

Sony grips and commands

Sony has launched the GP-VPT3 Wireless Shooting Grip – which also functions as a small tripod – and also launched a remote commander.

The new grip enables one-handed operation of zoom and focus controls, suitable for both left- and right-handed camera users, and includes a tilt mechanism for adjustable shooting angles. There's also a head mechanism for switching between selfies and outward-facing portrait shots. Supporting up to 1.5kg in weight, the GP-VPT3 can connect to Sony Alpha and Vlog Camera Series models via Bluetooth.

The company has also released the RMT-VP2 remote commander, which can be used independently or with the GP-VPT3 grip for added flexibility. It comes with a Movie button, Zoom/Focus controls, and a customisable C1 button for one-handed remote operation. The RMT-VP2 connects via Bluetooth to compatible Sony cameras and Xperia smartphones, with a range of up to 10 metres.

Both new products should be available now, with the GP-VPT3 costing £120 and the RMT-VP2 £75.

Bright monitor from Viltrox

The DC-A1 Camera Monitor, a 7in 1920x1080 touchscreen for photographers and video makers, has been released by Viltrox, a company best known for its budget lenses.

Key features include a maximum brightness of 2800nits, along with the ability to display images and video at 4K resolution at 60Hz; there are also monitoring tools and functions, such as 3D LUT, gyroscope, focus peaking, false colour, anamorphic de-squeeze and more. A fan automatically adjusts speed according to the temperature of the monitor, in order to keep it cool. The DC-A1 is relatively compact and lightweight at 188x110x28mm and 348g. It is powered by mains, batteries or USB-C and includes a carrying case and tilt and swivel mount.

The DC-A1 costs £211 from bit.ly/viltroxmonitor

The 7in touchscreen weighs 348g

© GETTY IMAGES

Salgado in 2020, with one of his iconic images from the Serra Pelada gold mine in Brazil

Sebastião Salgado dies at 81

WE ARE deeply saddened to learn of the death of the legendary social documentary photographer and environmentalist, Sebastião Salgado.

Salgado grew up in Brazil and earned a PhD in Economics from the University of Paris before getting a job as an economist. He turned to photojournalism in 1974 initially with the Sygma agency, then briefly with Magnum Photos, but first came to global attention with the iconic images that he took at the Serra Pelada gold mine in Brazil in 1986. These formed part of his landmark 1993 book, *Workers: An Archaelogy of the Industrial Age,* a visual tribute to manual labour in the developing world, which is widely regarded as one of the greatest photography books ever published.

This was followed by epic, long-term projects such as Migrations in 2000, which focused on the global movement of populations, Genesis (2013) on the world's wilderness areas, and Amazonia (2022) for which AP awarded him our Power of Photography Award. We will be publishing a more fulsome tribute in a future issue.

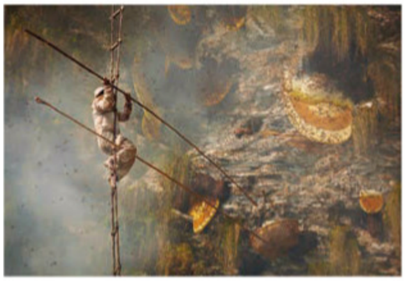
AP Editor Nigel Atherton interviewing Salgado at his Amazonia exhibition in 2021

Honey, that's a great idea...

DORSET-BASED photographer Andrew Newey is selling limited-edition prints of his internationally acclaimed Honey Hunters of Nepal project, with all proceeds going to the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF). Newey set up the sale to celebrate World Bee Day on 20 May, and it will run until 10 June. His pictures focus on the ancient tradition of honey-hunting among the Gurung people in the Himalayan foothills, as they risk their lives to harvest honey from the world's largest honeybee.

Both Newey and the WWF are keen to remind people of the vital role bees play in the survival of global ecosystems. 'There are more than 250 species of bees in the UK alone,' said Dr Benedict Dempsey, People and Nature Advisor at WWF-UK. 'Bees help pollinate the food we eat, support the livelihoods of millions of people around the world and help ecosystems flourish.'

For more details and print purchases, see andrewnewey.com/prints



© ANDREW NEWEY

One of Andrew's bee images from Nepal

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Groovy

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Viewpoint
Peter Travers

Modern cameras are actually decent value, says seasoned Canon watcher, Peter Travers

With new higher-end full-frame cameras priced around £4,500 these days, which is a big chunk of anyone's budget – are these price tags justified compared to what you were paying 10, 20 years ago?

To find out, I've fired up my time machine and compared older Canon EOS cameras' launch prices to new camera prices of today. As a Canon professional photographer, and former editor of the Canon magazine *PhotoPlus*, I've used every EOS 5-series camera, from the 5D to the R5 Mark II. Today I shoot with a Canon EOS 5D Mark IV and EOS R5.

So, to keep things on a level playing field for this price comparison, I've focused on the popular EOS 5D to EOS R5 series cameras, from 2005 to 2025.

Full disclosure – I initially set out to prove that new camera prices are extortionate. However on further investigation, it's interesting how camera prices were relatively high over 20 years ago, and when you now compare the original EOS 5D's price (with inflation) to the EOS R5… the results are surprising.

Inflation calculation

The price of an EOS 5D when launched in 2005 was £2,539. Adding on inflation, the 5D would cost £4,423 today. Now let's look at prices of the newer EOS R5 in comparison. The R5 was released in July 2020 with an RRP launch price of £4,199 – interestingly the inflation over those past four years (during the global pandemic and various lockdowns) suggests that's equal to a whopping £5,255 approx. today! Yet on Canon's online store the R5 is 'only' £3,799.

The latest EOS 5-series camera is the Canon EOS R5 Mark II, released in August 2024 with an RRP of £4,499. And that price has stayed pretty constant, whether buying directly from Canon or from a retailer with discounts.

When you consider inflation, the EOS R5 Mark II is actually decent value

Compared to the Canon EOS 5D's inflated price of £4,423 in 2025, it makes the EOS R5 Mark II actually very good value at £4,499 – especially considering all the incredible new AI technology and autofocus modes inside.

It's unfair to put a 2005 5D head-to-head with a 2024 R5 Mark II, but I can't resist – 12.8MP vs 45MP, 3fps vs 30fps, 9 AF points vs Dual Pixel Intelligent AF with Action Priority AF and Eye Control AF… I'll stop now.

Below are the body-only RRPs and year of launch in newest to oldest cameras:

Equivalent prices would be as of 2025 with inflation:

Canon EOS R5 Mark II	£4499 in 2024	£4574
Canon EOS R5	£4199 in 2020	£5255
Canon EOS 5D Mark IV	£3599 in 2016	£4865
Canon EOS 5D Mark III	£2999 in 2012	£4248
Canon EOS 5D Mark II	£2299 in 2008	£3692
Canon EOS 5D	£2539 in 2005	£4423

I have added on inflation, using the Bank Of England's inflation calculator, to see what the equivalent prices would be as of 2025. So perhaps when looking at today's camera prices, we should look at what's on offer, and how much we get – compared to what we used to get.

Do you have something you'd like to get off your chest? Send us your thoughts in around 500 words to the email address on page 3 and win a year's digital subscription to AP.

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From the archive

This week the AP time machine travels back to this month in 1962 and 2014

20 June 1962

I recently learned that my in-laws' neighbour, Marion, was once a model who had featured on the cover of AP. It seemed too good an opportunity to miss so here she is today, holding the very issue that she appeared on (below). The cover photo was taken on Shoreham Beach, West Sussex, on a windy day (the struggle with the umbrella is real) by a local snapper who, with his wife, ran an agency taking and selling such images to the press. Marion gave up modelling shortly after to start a family and still lives nearby.

This issue, which was edited by ALM Sowerby, comprised 160 pages, of which 30 were editorial and 130 were ads. Apart from a four-page colour section in the middle (two of which were adverts) the rest of the issue was black & white.

The main features were a reader's tribute to his beloved Mamiyaflex TLR, a review of the Fujica 35-EE rangefinder camera by Technical Editor Neville Maude, a guide to photographing children by 'famous American photographer' Grant M Haist, and one on capturing the drama of regattas by GH Pursell. From the 1930s right up to the 1980s movie-making was an important part of AP's remit and in this issue six pages (or 20% of the total editorial) was given over to cine equipment and discussion.

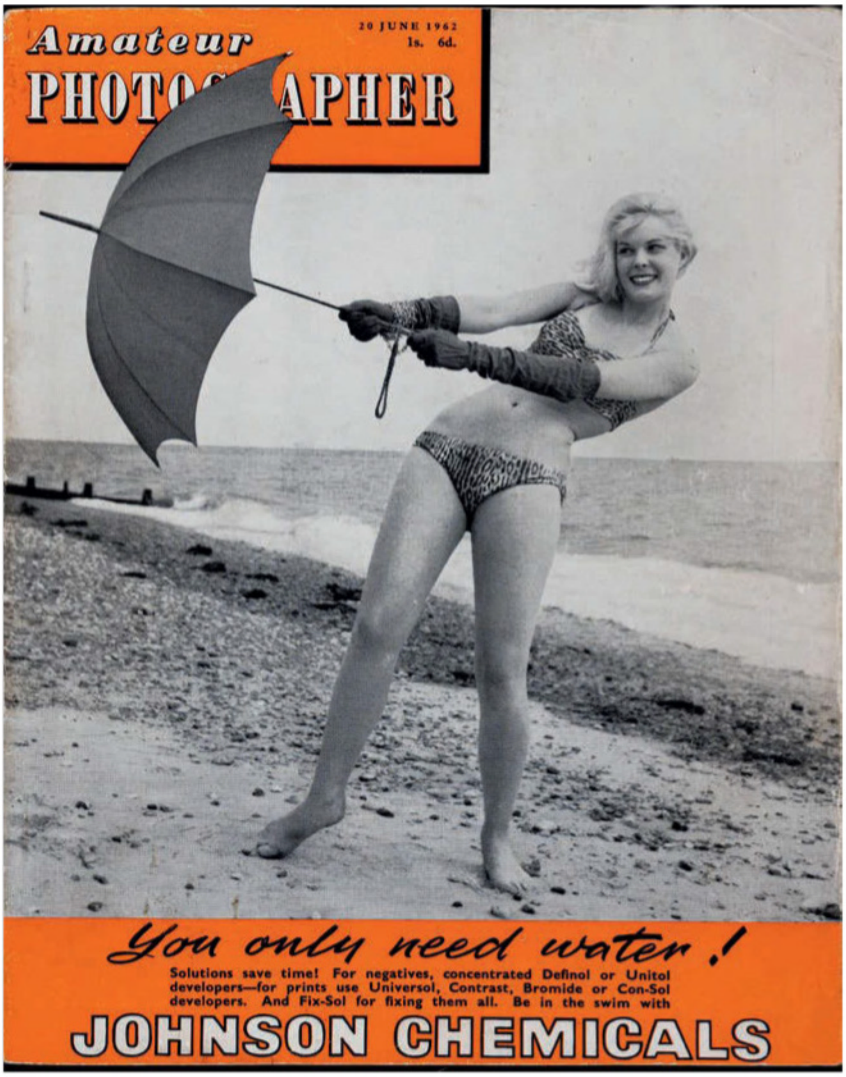

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PHOTO APHER

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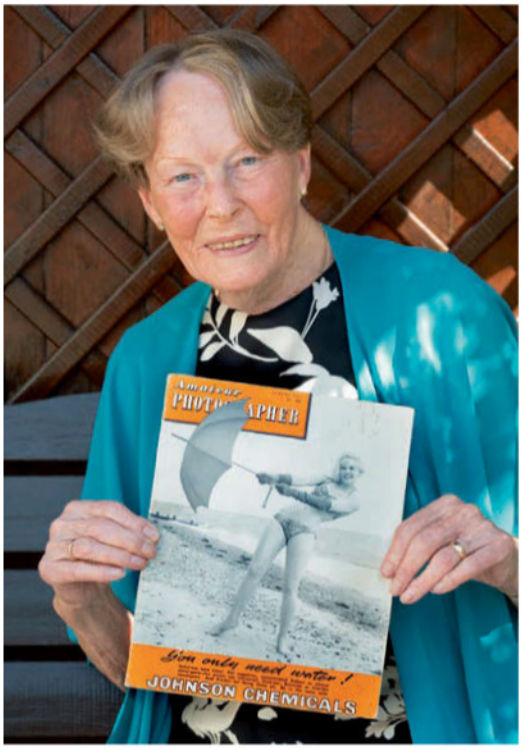
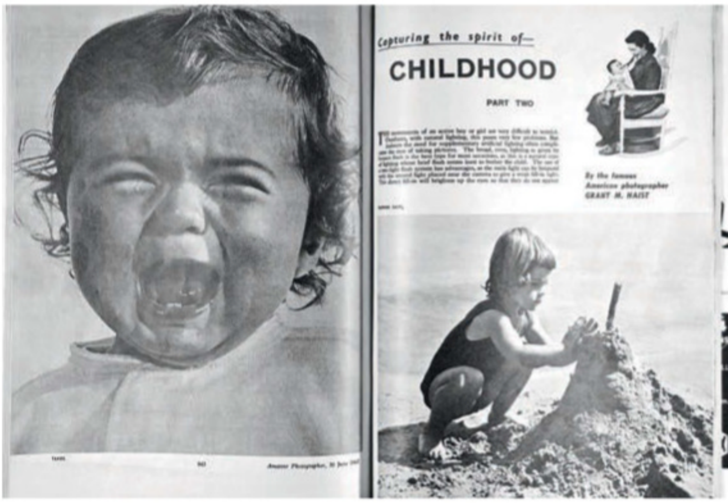


Above: Marion struggles with an umbrella on a windy day in Shoreham

Left: Marion today, shown holding a prized memory from her younger days

Right: A feature on 'Capturing the spirit of childhood'. One subject was not very happy about it



Capturing the spirit of—

CHILDHOOD

PART TWO

By the famous American photographer GRANT M. HAIST

Amateur Photographer, 20 June 1962
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A Rolleiflex Model T was compared with a Savile Row suit. It cost £2950 (equivalent)

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U.K. Distributors for Miranda Cameras—
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City gents in bowler hats were a popular feature of AP adverts in the 1960s

COLOUR COMES OUT BEST ON Kodak FILM
Kodak has had more experience in colour than any other photographic firm

A Kodak ad, one of only four colour pages

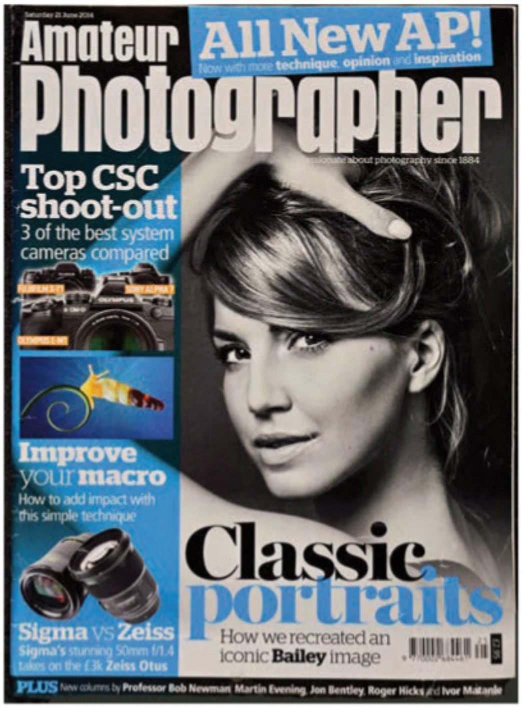
FUJICA
35-EE
Rear-shaft Focusing

Neville Maude liked the Fujica 35-EE

MAMIYA
How I use my latest treasure
By J. S. LEWINSKI
CAMERA DISCUSSION
AND
Interchangeable Lenses
Less Weight

JS Lewinski waxed lyrical about his Mamiyaflex and shared some images taken on it

24 June 2014


Saturday 21 June 2014
Amateur Photographer
All New AP!
Now with more technique, opinion and inspiration
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Top CSC shoot-out
3 of the best system cameras compared
FUJIFILM X-T1
SONY ALPHA 7
OLYMPUS E-M1
Improve your macro
How to add impact with this simple technique
Sigma vs Zeiss
Sigma's stunning 50mm f/1.4 takes on the £3k Zeiss Otus
Classic portraits
How we recreated an iconic Bailey image
PLUS New columns by Professor Bob Newman, Martin Evening, Jon Bentley, Roger Hicks and Ivor Matanle

This issue launched the last major redesign of AP, which remains largely in place today. Several new series debuted, including *Final Analysis*, fronted by Roger Hicks, and *Evening Class* by Martin Evening (both sadly now departed). We also kicked off a new series in which we recreated iconic images, starting with a David Bailey portrait of Jean Shrimpton. Our three-way CSC head-to-head was won by the Fujifilm X-T1.

Technique IN THE STUDIO
Classics Revisited
Jean Shrimpton
By David Bailey

Classics Revisited **ran for several years, during which time we recreated images by Penn, Donovan, Duffy, Sieff, Hurrell, Lichfield and, of course, Bailey**

Evening Class

Left: Martin Evening provided a critique of readers' pics

Right: Roger Hicks' *Final Analysis* was popular with AP readers

Final Analysis
Roger Hicks considers...

ALL IMAGES © CRISTINA MITTERMEIER

A flock of seagulls rests on a block of ice. Lancaster Sound, Nunavet, Canada

Hope

by Cristina Mittermeier

£65, Hemeria, 272 pages, hardback, ISBN: 9782490952540

Travelling the globe to capture our planet's biodiversity, this important book shows a master at work, says **Amy Davies**

Spanning more than 130 countries across every continent on the planet, this absolutely stunning book is a testament to a photographer who's had an incredible career.

Mittermeier named this book for the hope that she feels as she has travelled across the globe for the past three decades. That includes the hope that the answers to many of the modern world's problems, including climate change, can be found in the knowledge of indigenous people.

Writing in the introduction to the book she says, 'Can we work together, find a path forward, change our ways, and learn to coexist without destroying our planet? I believe we can.'

Split into different sections, each as stunning as the last, the book includes some truly glorious portraits, as well as sections on ocean life, polar regions, and even one on what happens after death. It's a book which you can easily return to again and again and keep finding new things to look at.

A foreword by Robert Redford is included, who says, 'The captivating beauty of this miraculous globe has always held a magnetic pull on my soul. As we grapple with an epidemic of sadness and despair for the state of our planet, Cristina Mittermeier's lens emerges as a clarion call, piercing through the noise to capture moments of profound beauty and stark truths.'

I would find it hard to argue with the above comment, and the images found within this book are a shining example of why it's more important than ever to work together to preserve the beauty, majesty and wonder of our amazing planet.

If you're interested in travel, nature and wildlife photography, there are few photographers more accomplished than Mittermeier, so it's very easy to recommend this beautiful book.

For more wildlife photography book recommendations, see our feature elsewhere in this issue on the best wildlife books.

Teetering on stick stilts against a cloudy sky, a group of bys from the Banna tribe balance high above the ground. Omo Valley, Ethiopia

Young Titouan Bernicot, the founder of the Coral Gardeners, playing with a pink whiptail stingray in a shallow lagoon. Mo'orea, French Polynesia

Reef sharks gather on the surface. Grand Bahama, The Bahamas

Books & exhibitions

The latest and best books and exhibitions from the world of photography

© RICHARD GARVEY-WILLIAMS

Classical techniques can be used even today

Mastering Composition by Richard Garvey-Williams

£19.99, Ammonite, 184 pages, softback, ISBN: 9781781454930

COMPOSITION

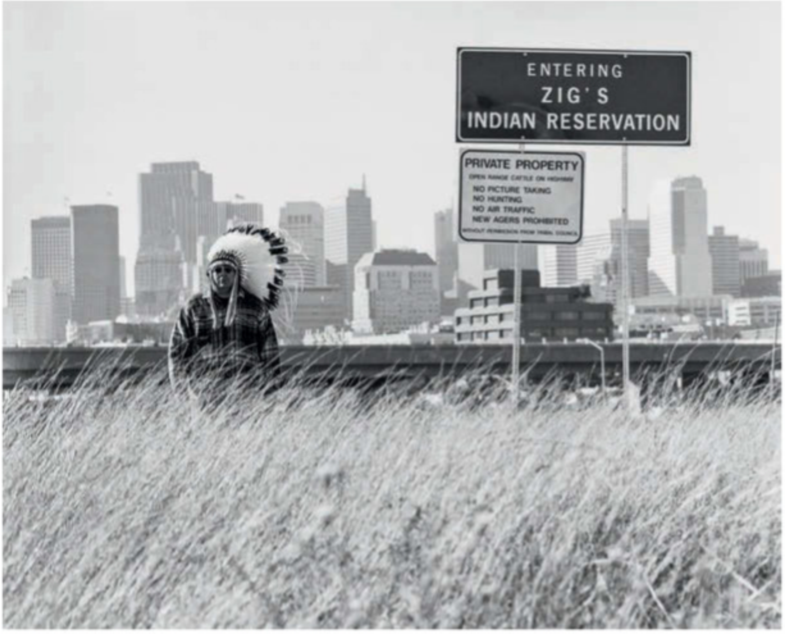
A new updated edition of this book includes the latest camera and software technologies, to make sure it's totally relevant.

For author and professional photographer Richard Garvey-Williams, the key to successful composition lies in a combination of four elements: an impactful subject; a dynamic composition; effective use of lighting; and the ability to evoke an emotional response in the viewer – it's the last of these that Garvey-Williams considers to be the most crucial.

Studying history to glean insights into classical composition techniques, including 'the Golden Rule' from Ancient Greece, Gestalt theory and the Fibonacci's sequence, Garvey-Williams takes a look through the concepts, rules and guidelines that can help you to get better results in your own work.

Also considered here is the role of tone and colour, and it's all talked through without the use of jargon or complicated instructions. His own photography is used to illustrate the examples, and they're beautiful too. Also on hand are diagrams and notations to help you get to grips with his techniques as easily as possible.

It's always worth a refresher when it comes to the fundamentals of photography, of which composition is arguably top of the tree. At under £20, it's well-priced to learn some new techniques, too.



COURTESY ANDREW SMITH GALLERY, TUCSON. © ZIG JACKSON

Black Earth Rising: Colonialism and Climate Change in Contemporary Art

by Ekow Eshun

£50, Thames and Hudson, 240 pages, hardback, ISBN: 9780500028780

Climate change is obviously a key topic up for current debate, but it also brings up vital questions about other important issues, including questions of who owns the land, social environmental justice, as well as the historical backdrop of European settlement in the New World.

As such, there's a diverse selection of intertwined and often difficult concepts presented here. Forced migration and slavery; the environmental consequences of colonialism; the occupation of Native lands; the urban plight of Black and Brown communities; and how cultural practices and knowledge systems of indigenous peoples can change our perspectives when thinking about the natural world. Each of these topics are explored through various artworks by different practitioners.

This is a book which covers not just photography, but also other forms of contemporary art. Indeed, there are over 200 contemporary artworks across a range of mediums, so it's a great way to see how photography fits into the wider art world.

It is split into three themed sections: Reckoning, Reimagining and Reclaiming. In doing so, it situates the voices of people of colour at the centre of the debate, rather than at its edge. The book is put together by Ekow Eshun, a writer, curator, journalist and broadcaster based in London. He was previously the director of the Institute of Contemporary Arts and is the author of a number of books; and this is another important volume that is as intriguing as it is necessary.

If you're looking for something that will challenge you and expand your knowledge, this is well worth a look.

COURTESY TERN GALLERY ON BEHALF OF THE ARTIST

Top left: Zig Jackson, Entering Zig's Indian Reservation: China Basin, 1997

Above: Carrie Mae Weems, A Distant View, from The Louisiana Project, 2003

Left: Melissa Alcena, NJ + LJ, Jaws Beach, 2021

COURTESY THE ARTIST AND GLADSTONE GALLERY, NEW YORK; FRAENKEL GALLERY, SAN FRANCISCO, AND GALERIE BARBARA THUMM, BERLIN
© CARRIE MAE WEEMS

ALL IMAGES © RALPH GIBSON

Ralph Gibson. Photographs 1960-2024

£60, Taschen, 552 pages, hardback, ISBN: 9783754402689

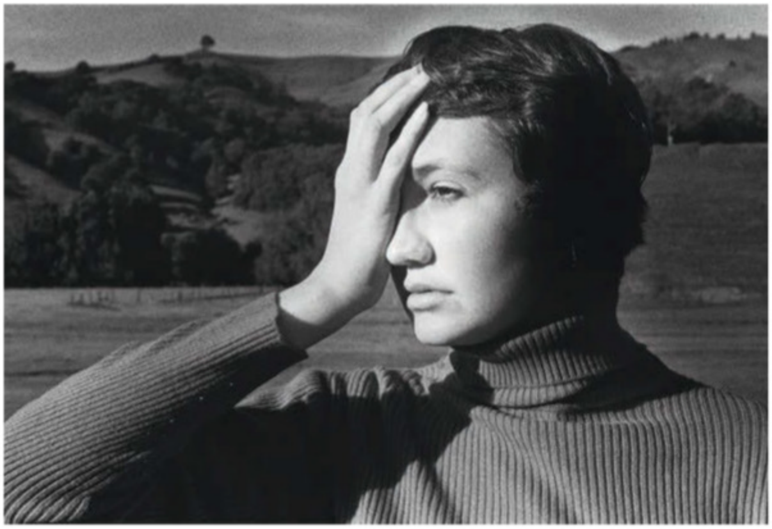
RALPH GIBSON

If you want to add the work of a legend to your bookshelf, now's your chance – at 552 pages for £60, the per page rate is an incredible bargain. This book charts the career of Ralph Gibson, covering six decades. Starting out as an assistant of none other than Dorothea Lange and Robert Frank in the 1960s, he made his way to New York in 1967 becoming considered in the same breath among contemporaries such as Larry Clark and Diane Arbus.

The most comprehensive collection of Gibson published to date, it has been produced in close collaboration with the photographer himself. That is always a treat, as you get a real insight into the way a creative person thinks, rather than how somebody else has decided to present their work.

Also included are short texts where he explains more about his philosophy for image making. You get an idea of his approach when you consider the names of some of his bodies of work – including The Somnambulist, Déjà Vu, Days at Sea and Chiaroscuro. In other words, expect considered, poetic and at-times surreal work.

There's also a diverse range of subjects here. Nudes portraits, still lives and documentary all exist side by side. Each page a treat and an eye-opener into how his craft has developed over time. He has remained loyal to his Leica cameras, so it's a delight for fans of that brand too.



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Our favourite photos posted by readers on our social media channels this week

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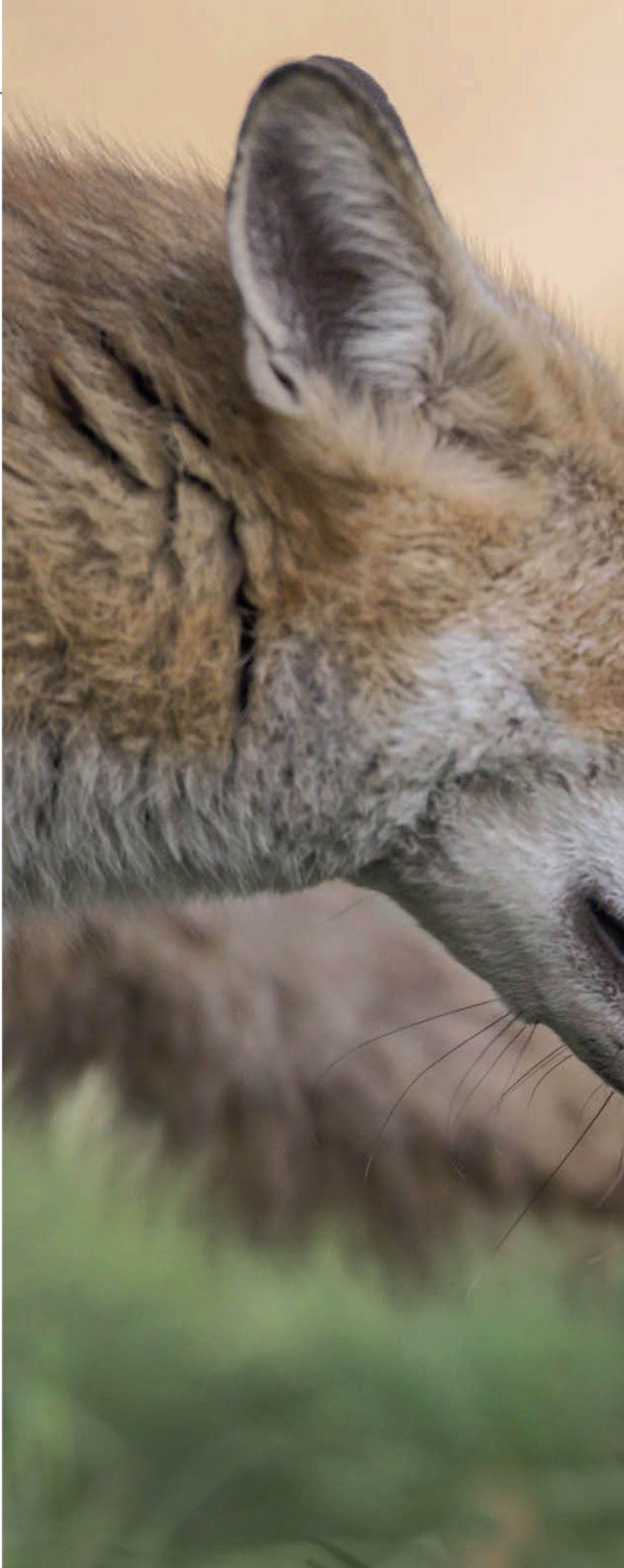
Sweet Moment
by Claire Norman

Nikon Z7, 70-200mm, 1/2500sec at f/4, ISO 800, at 200mm

'This is a local fox that lives in a small cemetery with the rest of his fox family. He was a cub himself last year and now has four of his own. He seems to be an attentive father. The cubs were first seen the first week of April. I photograph the fox family weekly and I love to watch their behaviour. I feel very lucky to have captured this sweet moment.'

Instagram: @clairenormanwildlifephoto



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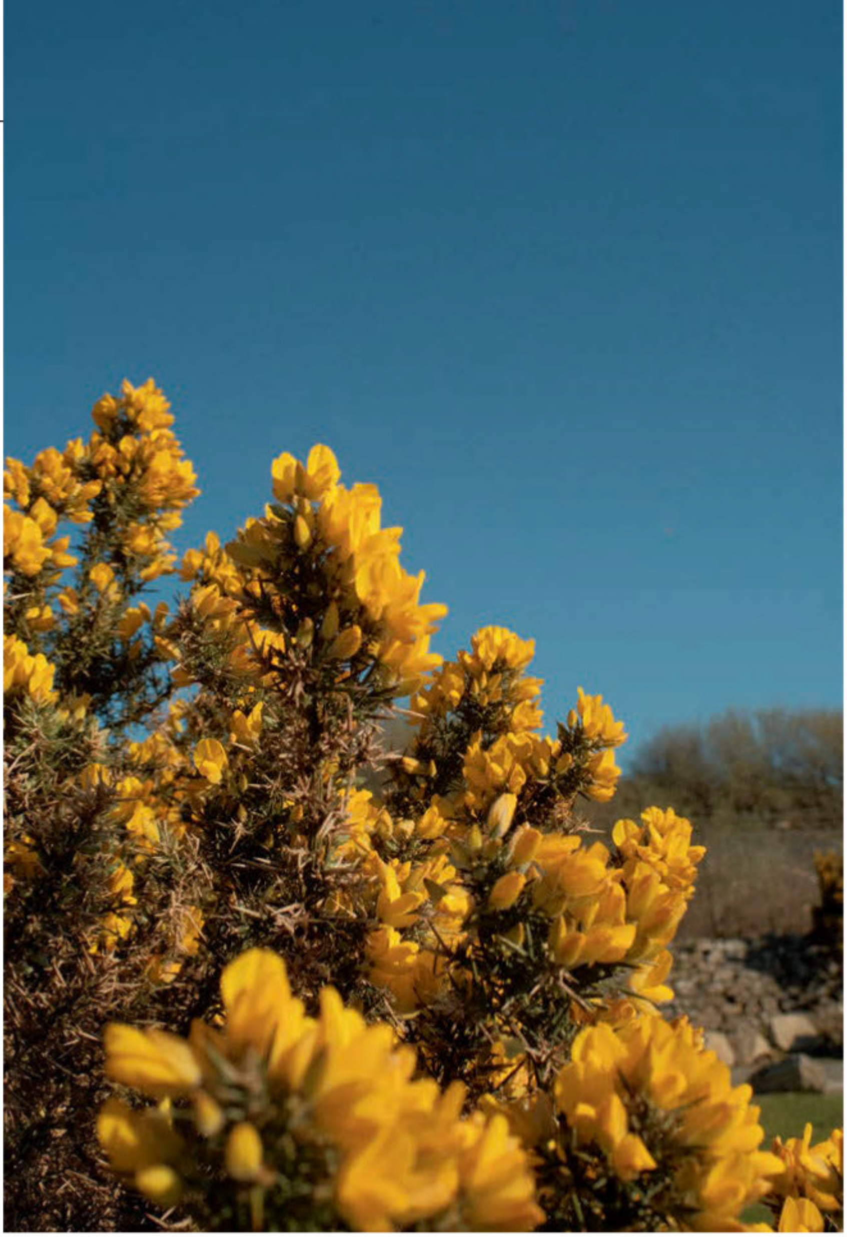
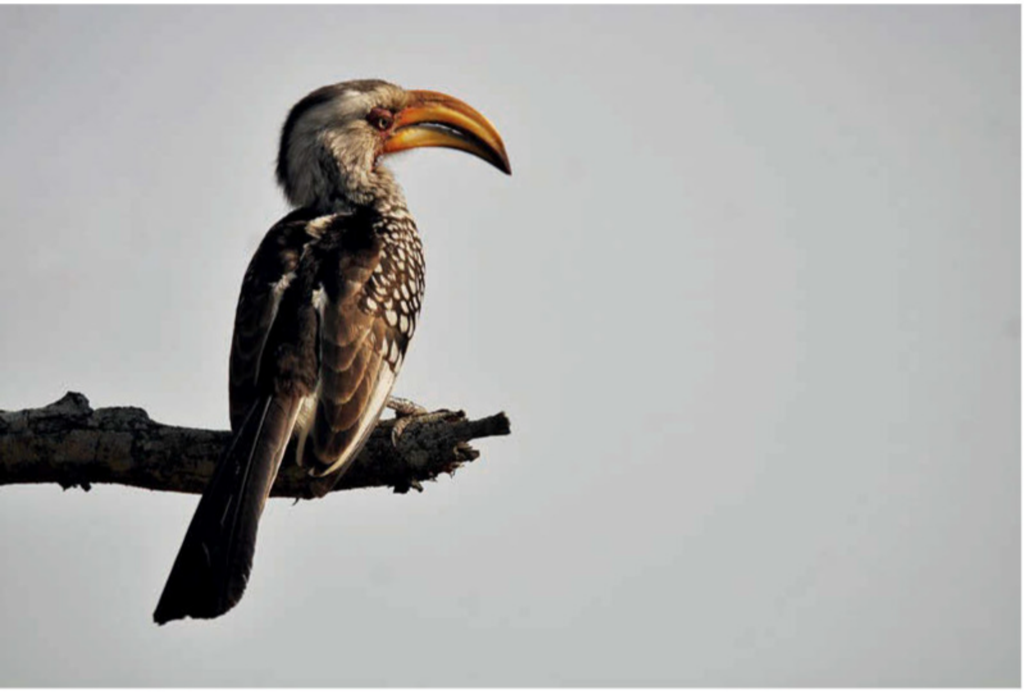


Glowing Gorse
by Pete Jefferies

Fujifilm X-T20, Zuiko 50mm F1.8, 1/280sec at f/8, ISO 200

'This photograph with clear blue skies behind the sunbathed yellow gorse was taken on the edge of Dartmoor near Okehampton, Devon. I use Capture One, however this is an unedited Classic Chrome recipe JPEG right out the camera.'
Instagram: @whatamellowman

We also liked...



The Mischievous Yellow-billed Hornbill
by Aminah Shabir

Canon EOS 2000D, Sigma 150-600mm F5-6.3 DG OS HSM Sports lens, 1/800sec at f/6.3, ISO 100, at 470mm

'We observed this mischievous yellow-billed hornbill stealing the food of locals, swooping over and swiping chips and all sorts. This beautiful bird perched on an overhead tree branch, where I was able to get a quick snap with a clear white background, which helped to bring out its vibrant colours.'
Instagram: @aminah_shabir_photography
Website: aminahshabirphotography.pixieset.com

Want to see your pictures here? Simply share them with our Instagram or Facebook communities using the hashtag **#appicoftheweek**. Or you can email your best shot to us at **ap.ed@kelsey.co.uk**. See page 3 for how to find us.

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© JONATHAN & ANGELA SCOTT / TAKEN FROM *REMEMBERING CHEETAHS*

A decade of memories

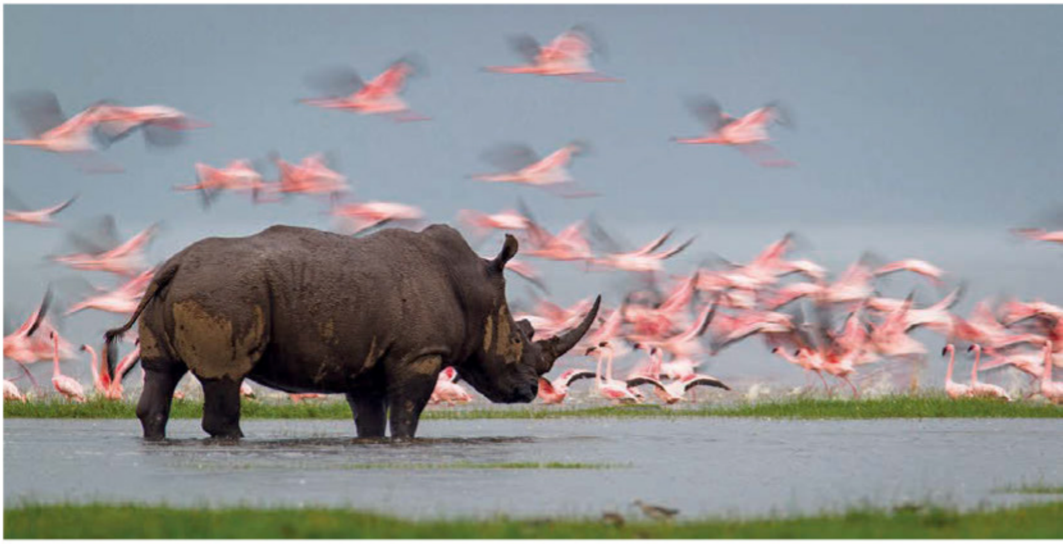
One tragic night in Kenya sparked a global conservation movement that, through the power of photography, has raised over £1.2 million. **Jade Burrell** finds out more

In 2015 wildlife photographer Margot Raggett MBE launched Remembering Wildlife, a series of crowdfunded photography books aimed at raising funds for endangered species conservation. Now marking its tenth anniversary, the project has, to date, raised more than £1.2million and has supported 79 conservation projects in 34 countries.

Each book focuses on a different endangered species, using beautiful photography to inspire action and generate protection funds. The first book, *Remembering Elephants*, was funded through Kickstarter in 2016 and raised over £135,000 for The Born Free Foundation, marking the beginning of what would become a decade-long movement. Since then, 54,000 copies of the nine books have been sold globally. All monies raised via Kickstarter are used to fund the production and printing of books and, if enough is raised, to pay for launch events.

This October, *10 Years of Remembering Wildlife* will be released, celebrating a decade of impact. This special anniversary edition will highlight pangolins – the world's most trafficked mammal – while revisiting species featured in earlier volumes. The Kickstarter campaign smashed its goal, raising £172,233 and exceeding more than eight times its target.

© MARSEL VAN OOSTEN / TAKEN FROM *REMEMBERING BEARS*



© ISAK PRETORIUS / TAKEN FROM *REMEMBERING RHINOS*

The beginning of Remembering Wildlife

Remembering Wildlife was born from a moment of heartbreak and anger. While living and working as a photographer in Kenya's Maasai Mara, Margot took a trip to northern Kenya, staying at a remote safari camp called Laikipia Wilderness. One night, everything changed.

'We were staying in the camp when we were woken up at four in the morning by the sound of hyenas going crazy,' Margot recalls. 'We went down to investigate and found a young elephant, around 14 years old, who had been killed by a poisoned arrow. His tusks were still intact, but he had suffered a slow and painful death over several days.

'That tragic encounter, and the realisation that many tourists were unaware of the poaching, ignited Margot's determination to act. 'I was angry, and the more I started to understand how bad the poaching crisis was, the more I wanted to try to raise awareness of it.'

Margot admits she wasn't sure how far the idea could go. 'I thought it would be a one-off book on elephants. I had a bit of a following on social media as a photographer, but I wasn't famous enough to sell enough books to raise the kind of money and awareness I wanted to.'

She asked famous wildlife photographers to send photos to create a beautiful collaboration. The idea was simple but ambitious: to make a photography book that could shine a light on the plight of elephants and raise vital funds for their protection.

Left: Jonathan & Angela Scott, Kenya. Image taken in the Maasai Mara, Kenya. Species – cheetah

Above: Isak Pretorius, S Africa. Taken in Kenya. Species – southern white rhino

Below: Marsel van Oosten, The Netherlands. Image taken in Svalbard, Norway. Species – polar bear

Jonathan and Angela Scott were among the very first to lend their support. 'Margot was the key,' Jonathan recalls. 'She joined us on a number of safaris, and struck up a close bond with Angie. When she came up with the idea for *Remembering Elephants*, Angie encouraged her and helped open doors with photographers and conservationists.'

Their early backing helped to legitimise the project – and Margot's mission. 'She had the passion and the vision,' says Jonathan, 'but it was her sheer determination and incredible organisational skills that made it all happen.'

Margot also explains the meaning behind the name: 'The reason we call it "Remembering" is because the theory was if we don't save these animals now, say in 20 or 30 years; when they are extinct, then this would be the tribute to what they had been like in the wild at this moment in time by the best photographers we could get.'

The book took 18 months to create – from the idea to fundraising and selling. It sold out in just two months, and soon, people asked, 'What's next?'

The growing impact

The project quickly grew, with top photographers worldwide joining in to help protect more species and ecosystems.

Photographers such as Paul Goldstein, who has spent more than 30 years guiding wildlife tours and photographing wildlife across six continents, have been key to the project's success. Paul's deep commitment to conservation – especially his fundraising work for Bengal tigers – made him a natural fit for the Remembering Wildlife inititaive.

'Margot approached me for the first book, and I didn't hesitate,' Paul recalls. 'This was a superb idea with practical and pragmatic ideals: critical in conservation. I have been involved in all but one [book].'

Each book in the series has focused on a specific species or group of species, raising funds to support critical conservation efforts. From elephants to pangolins, these books have highlighted well-known and lesser-known animals that face the threat of extinction.

'You feel part of a cause,' says wildlife photographer Federico Veronesi, reflecting on what it means to contribute to the Remembering Wildlife project. For him, it's about being part of something bigger – a global effort to protect the species that don't have a voice of their own.

Federico has seen the power of wildlife photography firsthand. 'Wildlife photography has a compelling role in connecting people with wildlife, making people feel the animals' emotions, creating empathy and understanding,' he continues. 'Which hopefully will convert into halting actions that harm wildlife.'

He recalls travelling to China in 2013 as part of a campaign to raise awareness about the ivory trade, where powerful images of elephants moved audiences in schools and universities to tears – many only then realising the devastating toll of the ivory industry.

For Federico, this calling has been lifelong: 'I developed a strong passion for African wildlife as a child, and then in photography shortly after,' he says. 'After university, I moved to Kenya to live as close as possible to the animals I wanted to photograph and tell stories about.'

He first met Margot in Kenya's Maasai Mara. 'I thought her idea of bringing photographers together for conservation for the first time had enormous potential. I immediately agreed to donate an image or more.'

One of Federico's photographs was featured on the cover of the first Remembering Wildlife book. A decade later, he remains committed to the project and continues to use his lens to inspire change. (See the article elsewhere in this issue, for more on Federico.)

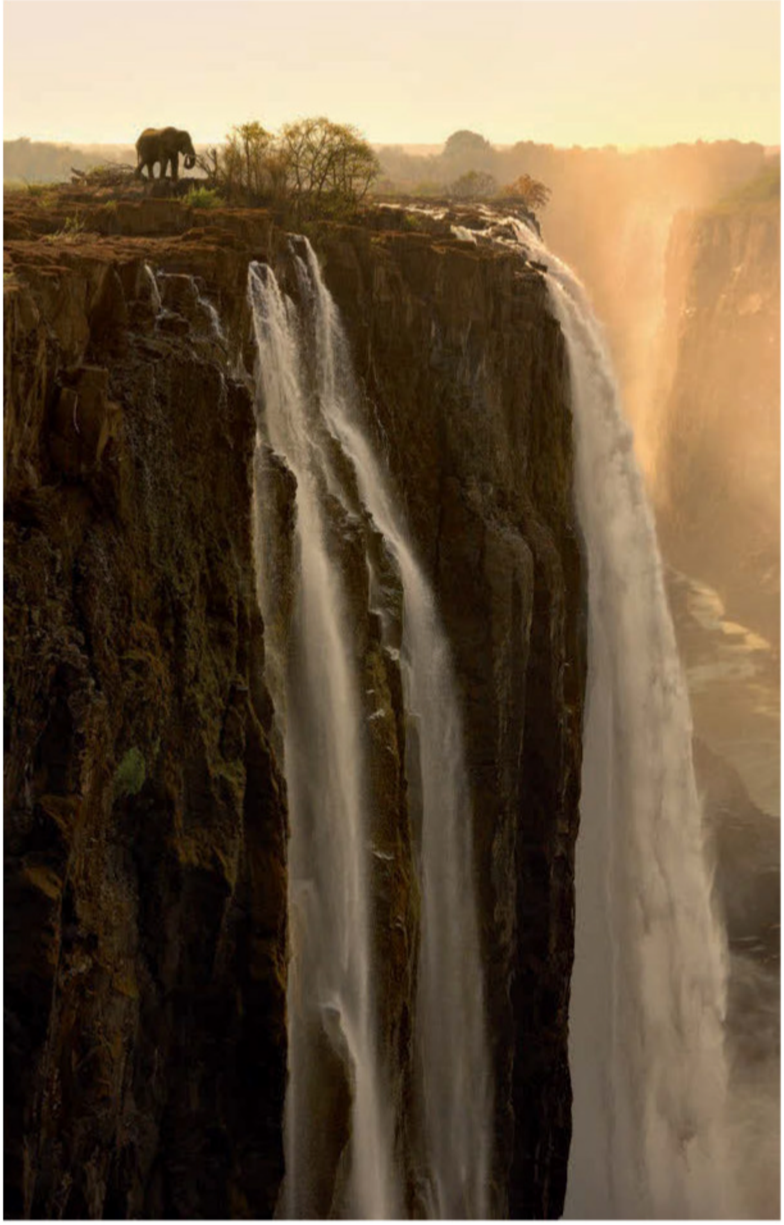
Picture this: A better future

Through the Remembering Wildlife books, photographers have captured images that tell the stories of endangered species and encourage people to take action. Each stunning image serves as both a celebration of wildlife and a stark reminder of what's at stake if conservation efforts fail.

For Margot, the success of Remembering Wildlife proves that photography can be a force for good in conservation. 'The project has grown beyond what I ever expected,' she reflects. 'What started as an idea to raise awareness about elephant poaching has become a platform for conservation, and the impact has been incredible.'

Jonathan and Angela agree. Having contributed their own photography and words to several editions, they've seen first-hand the momentum the series has built. '*Remembering* offered the perfect vehicle for concerned individuals to contribute to something they really cared about,' Jonathan says. 'It's allowed people who might not have known how to make a difference, to help fund vital conservation work

© MARGOT RAGGETT / TAKEN FROM *REMEMBERING CHEETAHS*



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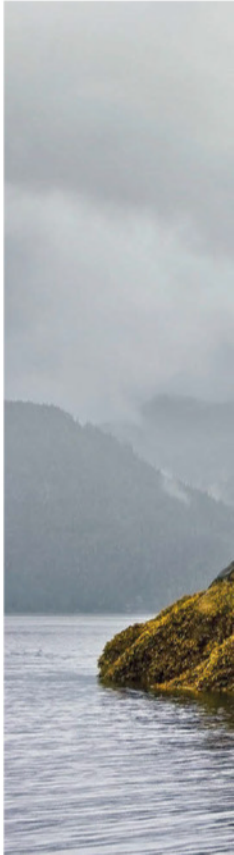
Above: Margot Raggett, UK. Image taken in Central Kalahari, Botswana. Species – African leopard

Left: Marsel van Oosten, The Netherlands. Image taken at Victoria Falls, Zambia. Species – African savannah elephant



© JACHA POTGIETER / TAKEN FROM *REMEMBERING GREAT APES*

‘Each stunning image serves as both a celebration of wildlife and a stark reminder of what’s at stake if conservation efforts fail’

Left: Jacha Potgieter, South Africa. Image taken in Kalimantan, Indonesia. Species – Bornean orangutan

Below: Thomas D Mangelsen, USA. Image taken at Knight Inlet, British Columbia, Canada. Species – American black bear

© THOMAS D MANGELSEN / TAKEN FROM *REMEMBERING BEARS*

– and in return, they receive a beautifully illustrated book full of the world’s finest wildlife photography.’

They add that the series’ impact isn’t merely about money raised. ‘It keeps the conversation going – these books are catalysts. The combination of iconic species and powerful imagery naturally draws in the public, the media, and decision-makers.’

Over the years, Remembering Wildlife has expanded to cover species such as lions, rhinos, and great apes, raising hundreds of thousands of pounds for frontline projects. The beautifully presented books have built a passionate global community of photographers, conservationists, and animal lovers who share a common goal: to protect the planet’s most vulnerable creatures before it’s too late.

Reflections: ten years later

As Remembering Wildlife celebrates a decade of impact, Margot Raggett reflects on the project’s journey and the remaining challenges. ‘It’s been an emotional rollercoaster,’ she says, acknowledging both the successes and the frustrations. ‘I often think, “Why isn’t this bigger? Why don’t we have more photographers, awareness, and action?” Not for vanity’s sake, but because that would help us make a greater difference in saving more species.’

Despite its humble beginnings, Margot has watched the project grow from a simple idea to a powerful global initiative. Yet, there’s always more to do – more species to highlight, more awareness to raise. The weight of this responsibility can be overwhelming at times. ‘There are days when I feel like we’re fighting a battle too big to win,’ Margot admits. ‘But then I remember why we started this: to give a voice to animals that don’t have one. And that keeps me going.’

Some projects have felt more personal to Margot than others. The rhinos, in particular, hold a special place in her heart. She

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has seen firsthand the devastating effects of poaching on these creatures, and witnessing the efforts supported through Remembering Wildlife brings a deep sense of fulfilment. But the pangolins truly stand out as one of Margot's proudest moments.

'When we decided to put a pangolin on the cover of the latest book, it was a gamble,' she says. 'People didn't even know what pangolins were. But the more that I learned about their plight, the more I knew we had to raise awareness for them. It felt right, even if it was a risk.'

Hopes for the future

Looking ahead, Margot remains cautiously optimistic about the future of Remembering Wildlife, acutely aware of the challenges that still lie ahead. 'I'm careful not to take anything for granted. There's always more to be done, and the urgency is ever-present. But I'm hopeful. Every year, I have new ideas, new species to focus on, and new goals.'

Plans for the project's future are kept under wraps until January when Margot announces the focus for the year ahead. 'We want to keep surprising people, to show them that conservation can be innovative and impactful.

Above: Yaron Schmid, Israel. Image taken in Serengeti National Park, Tanzania. Species – lion

Right: Patrick Bentley, Zambia. Image taken in South Luangwa National Park, Zambia. Species – African wild dog

© PATRICK BENTLEY / TAKEN FROM *REMEMBERING AFRICAN WILD DOGS*

Highlighting lesser-known animals like the pangolin is a key part of that.'

For Jonathan and Angela, that sense of purpose is essential. 'You can't just raise awareness – we must give people a reason to care and act. That's what Remembering Wildlife does so brilliantly. The photographs move people emotionally, but they also point to solutions. It's about evoking awe, yes – but also about saving landscapes, not just species. Without a home, these animals have no future.'

The elephant in the room

In a world where conservation often takes a back seat to other pressing issues, Remembering Wildlife serves as a crucial reminder that the fight to save endangered species is ongoing – and that individuals can make a real difference. Margot's personal drive and resilience are at the heart of the project, and her belief in the power of photography and community to effect change continues to inspire those around her.

'At the end of the day, it's about hope,' Margot says. 'We have to believe we can make a difference, even if it seems impossible. Every small step counts. It's easy to feel overwhelmed by the scale of the problem, but if everyone does something – no matter how small – we can create a world where wildlife is protected for future generations.'

Remembering Wildlife is more than just a series of photography books; it's a call to action, a testament to the power of passion and perseverance, and proof that every individual, no matter their starting point, has the ability to make a difference.

Margot's vision for the future is simple: keep growing the project, raise more funds, and, most importantly, bring together photographers, conservationists, and supporters who believe in the power of photography to create real change.

As Remembering Wildlife continues to grow, it stays grounded in a core belief: that conservation only works when it's funded. Every photograph contributed, and every book sold directly supports efforts to protect endangered animals and their habitats.

To follow Remembering Wildlife and support its mission, visit its website (**rememberingwildlife.com**), explore the projects it has helped, and back its latest book on Kickstarter. You can also stay updated by following **@rememberingwildlife** and **@margotraggettphotography** on Instagram.
@federico_veronesi
@paulgoldstein

Below: Sunil V Nair, India. Image taken in Jim Corbett Tiger Reserve, India. Species – Bengal tiger

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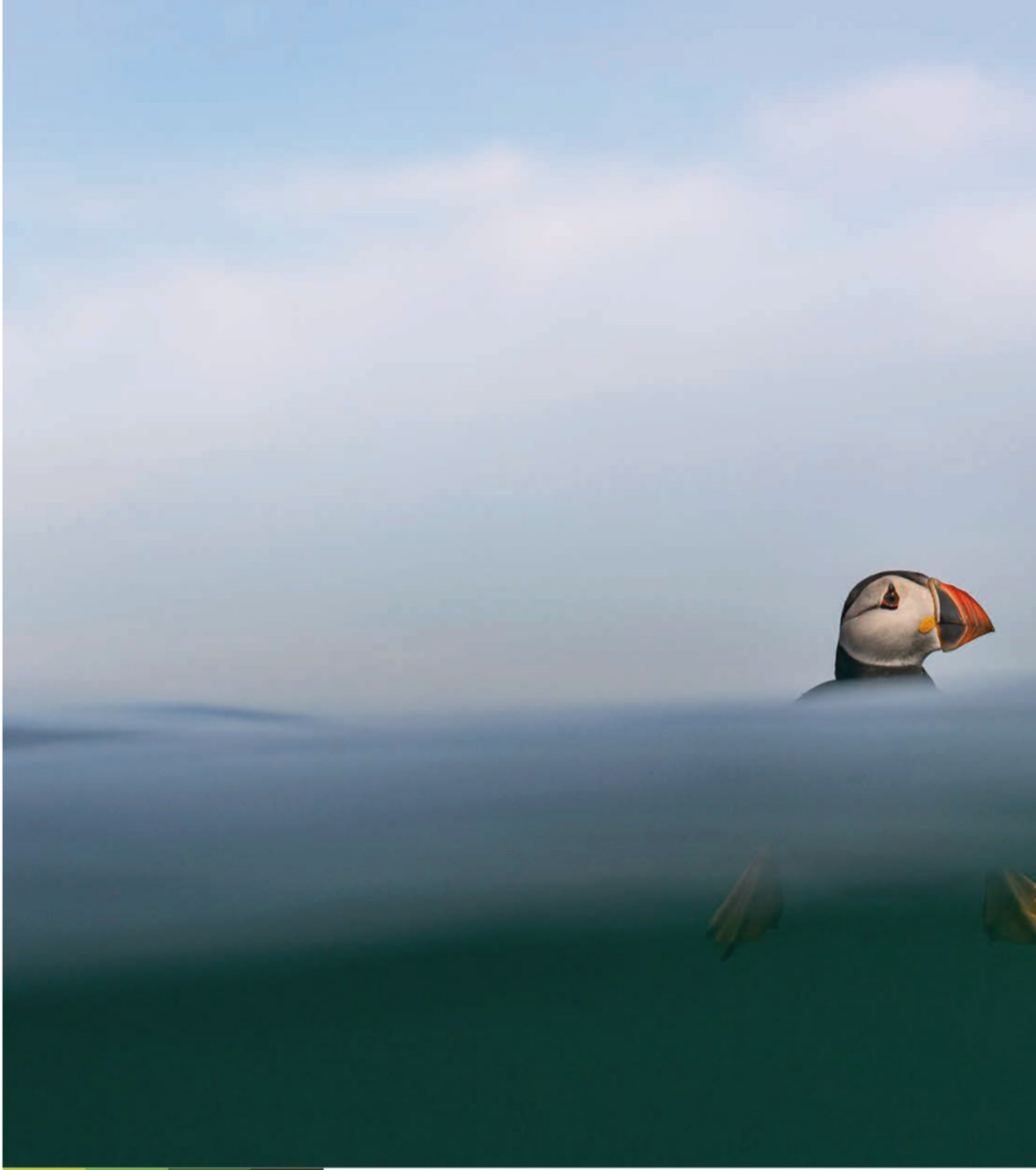


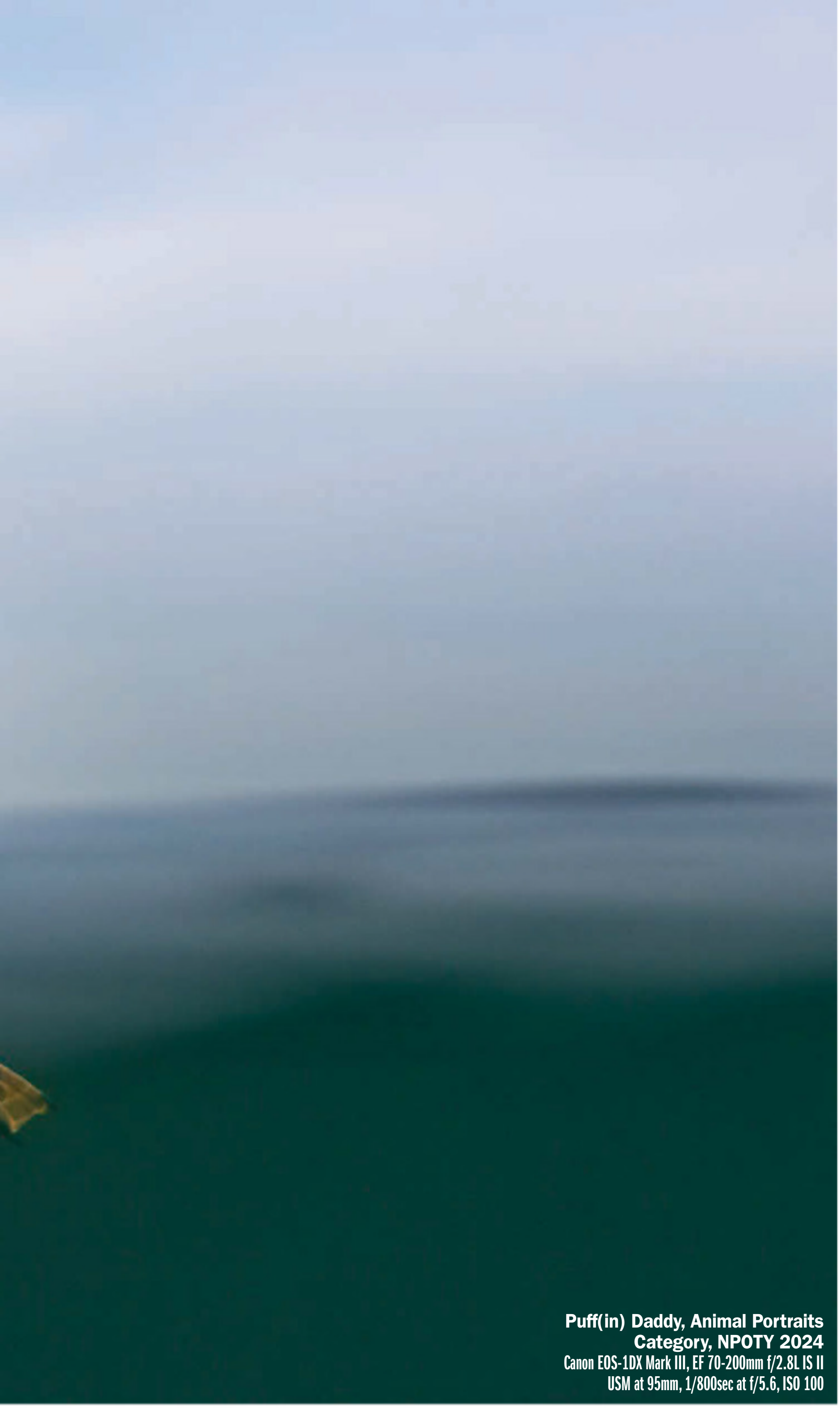
© BRIAN MATTHEWS / NATURE PHOTOGRAPHER OF THE YEAR 2024

Photo Insight

Puffin

by Brian Matthews

An unusual view, this image was highly commended in the Nature Photographer of the Year 2024, Animal Portraits category. **Amy Davies** tells us more about it



Puff(in) Daddy, Animal Portraits Category, NPOTY 2024
Canon EOS-1DX Mark III, EF 70-200mm f/2.8L IS II USM at 95mm, 1/800sec at f/5.6, ISO 100

Puffins are a popular subject for wildlife photographers and enthusiasts. With their distinctive colouring and characterful personalities, it's not hard to see why.

I'm not sure I've ever seen a picture of one that looks quite like this before, which is why I was drawn to it from the list of winners at last year's Nature Photographer of the Year.

Highly commended in the Animal Portraits category, it gives us an insight into puffin behaviour. The puffin is also a bird we can photograph here on British shores, and as someone who spends a lot of time in West Wales, it's given me inspiration that perhaps I might be able to see something similar myself at some point.

Every year, in late July, puffins prepare to leave the coasts and islands of the UK. But before they go, the puffins gather together in huge 'rafts', which can sometimes number in the thousands.

For the past four years, photographer Brian Matthews has been travelling across the UK to document coastal wildlife as part of a project covering British biodiversity, climate change and education.

This image was shot in the Farne Islands in Northumberland, not too far from Brian's home. This site in the North East is an internationally significant seabird breeding site, with numbers around 100,000. For Brian, it's one of his favourite places to visit.

In order to capture this unique shot, he had custom-made puffins created, and worked with a local boat operator, Billy Shiel. Billy's son, Olly, took Brian out for early morning sessions, helping to familiarise himself within the vast puffin rafts. The approach was a success, with many rare images captured, including this wonderful image showing a puffin perched on top of a wave.

Conservation efforts

It's hoped that images like this will help with conservation efforts for puffins and other seabirds. A ban on industrial sandeel fishing in the UK has recently been implemented, with the aim of balancing the needs of the fishing industry with the marine wildlife which occupies our seas. Over the next ten years, we'll find out whether the ban has helped the birds to overcome many of the challenges they face, including – but not limited to, climate change causing a rise in sea temperatures.

This is just one of the many award-winning shots that Brian has taken during his almost 30-year career. As well as NPOTY, he has been decorated by other prestigious contests including Wildlife Photographer of the Year. Although he has travelled extensively across the globe, most recently he has been concentrating his efforts on the UK, and is working on producing a book documenting the coastline that will used across British schools to help educate the next generation about issues such as climate change and biodiversity.

Brian shot the image using a Canon EOS-1D X Mark III and a Canon EF 70-200mm f/2.8 lens, with Aquatech Underwater housing. It's one of the 22,851 images that were submitted to last year's NPOTY awards, with photographers from almost 100 countries taking part.

The latest edition of NPOTY has just closed, and we very much look forward to seeing the latest highly commended and winning entries when they are announced. To find out more about the competition, visit naturephotographeroftheyear.com and to see more of Brian's work, see Instagram.com/bwmphoto

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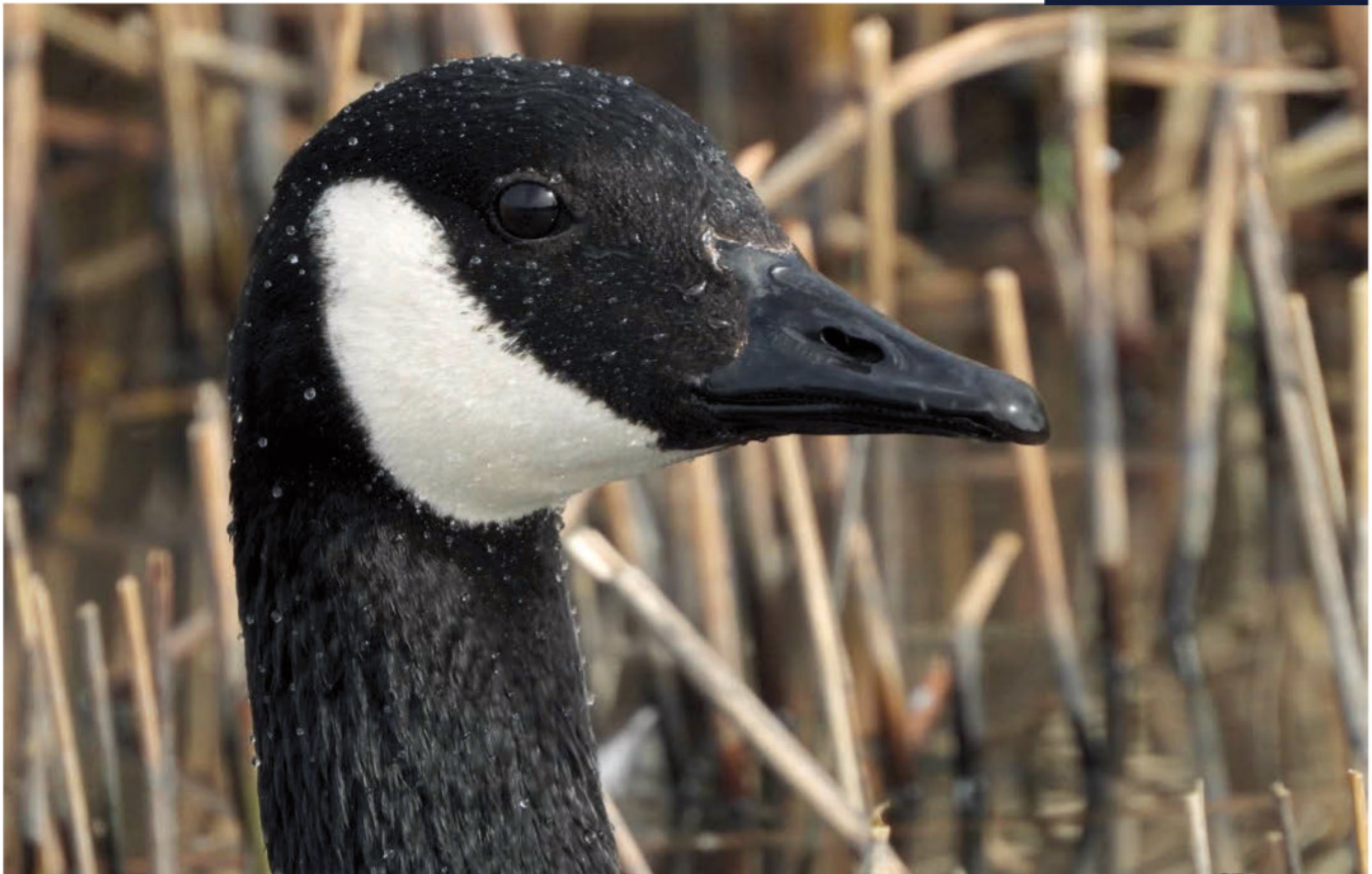


You can get some nicely detailed shots at long focal lengths, making it a good choice for (some) wildlife
1700mm equiv, 1/400sec at f/6.3, ISO 400

Nikon Coolpix P1100

With a 125x zoom and DSLR-like handling, this bridge camera could be very popular – but little has changed from its predecessor. **Amy Davies** finds out more

The Nikon P1100 follows on from the P1000, which was discontinued in 2024. In most respects it's the same camera, but now has the addition of a USB-C port for charging, as per EU mandates for all new cameras sold.

It sits at the top of Nikon's bridge camera range, and boasts a whopping 125x zoom lens – the longest you'll find on any bridge camera. For that, you'll pay a high asking price – it retails for over £1,000. But with plenty of potential versatility, it could well be worth it.

Features

Bridge cameras with long built-in zoom lenses remain popular at a time when smartphones have all but killed off other types of compact camera. Note that 'compact' is the category here purely because the lens can't be removed – the camera itself is far from small.

Inside the P1100 is a 16MP 1/2.3-inch sensor. That's smaller than the sensors found in many smartphones these

At a glance

£1049

- 16MP 1/2.3-inch CMOS sensor
- 24-3000mm equivalent f/2.8-8 lens (125x zoom)
- ISO 100-6400
- Up to 7 frames per second shooting
- 4K 30p video
- 3.2in, 921k-dot vari-angle TFT LCD (not touch-sensitive)
- 0.39in, 2.36m-dot viewfinder
- Single SD/SDHC/SDXC card slot
- 146.3x118.8x181.3mm, 1,410g
- USB-C in-camera charging

Focal points

In most respects, the P1100 is the same camera as its predecessor, but now with USB-C charging

Chunky

Even with the lens fully retracted, this is still a very hefty and heavy piece of kit.

Mode dial

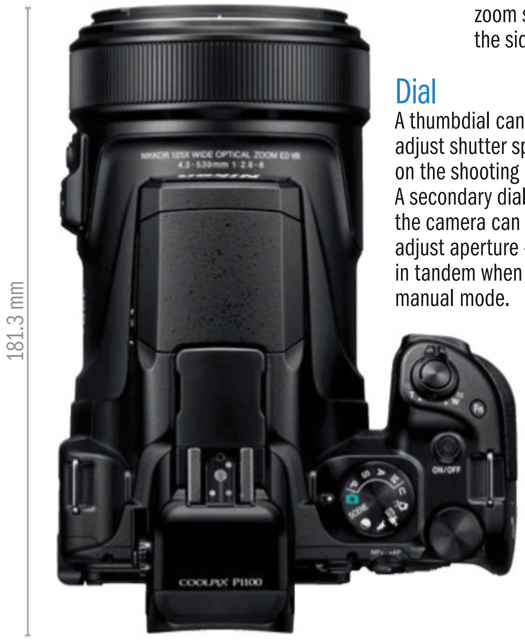
A mode dial contains a full set of different shooting modes, including PASM, as well as a slot for user-defined settings.

Zoom rocker

You can use the zoom rocker around the shutter button to move the zoom in and out, and there's another zoom switch found on the side of the lens.

Dial

A thumbdial can be used to adjust shutter speed, depending on the shooting mode you're in. A secondary dial on the back of the camera can be used to adjust aperture – use them both in tandem when working in full manual mode.



Screen

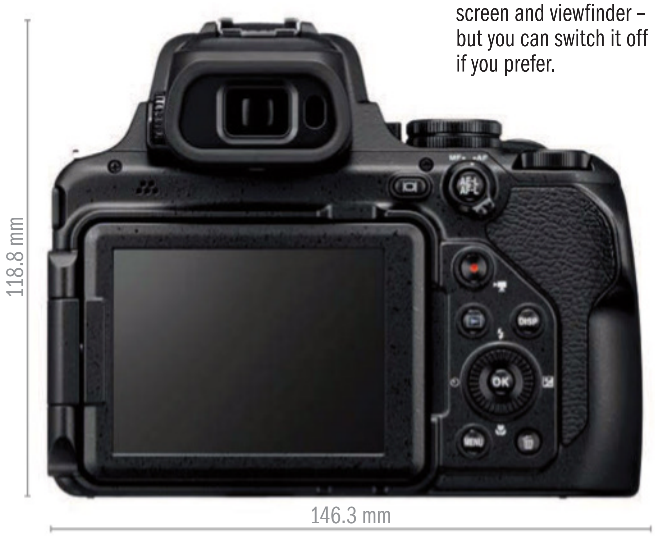
The screen is fully articulated, meaning you can fold it facing inwards when not in use, or set it pointing forwards for videos and selfies.

Macro mode

To access macro focusing, push down on the navipad. You'll be able to focus very closely on a subject to create frame-filling shots.

Viewfinder sensor

The electronic viewfinder will automatically activate once you lift the camera to your eye, thanks to this sensor. It's useful for a seamless transition between screen and viewfinder – but you can switch it off if you prefer.



days, but it means that you can also fit in an enormous lens for photographing far-away subjects – which is something that smartphones can't (yet) do quite as well.

Cameras like this can be popular with wildlife and travel photographers. They give you the ability to shoot distant subjects, without having to carry a bag full of heavy and expensive lenses. And while it's not a cheap camera, if you were to look at the P1100's RRP next to a mirrorless or DSLR camera and a set of lenses covering anywhere near the same range, you'd see that it's actually much cheaper.

As it stands, there's still quite a few bridge cameras out there available to buy, but the P1100 stands alone in terms of its lengthy reach. That 125x zoom gives a 35mm equivalent range of 24-3000mm. The DSLR or mirrorless lenses you'd need to come close to matching this would likely require a suitcase to transport. The maximum aperture of the P1100's lens is f/2.8 at the wideangle end, but this drops quite quickly once you start zooming, reaching f/8 by the time you're at the 3000mm end.

If you feel you need even more reach – I'm not sure what for – then you can also zoom digitally. If you'd like to record video with the P1100, up to 4K 30p shooting is available.

The battery charges in-camera, using the new USB-C port. A USB cable is supplied in the box, but a charging plug is not, so if you don't already have one of these you'll need to buy one separately.

Other features of note include built-in Wi-Fi and Bluetooth, which have been upgraded to the latest versions for maximum stability. There's a 3.5mm socket for an external microphone, and the ability to record in raw format.

Build and handling

There really is no getting away from the fact that this is one chunky camera. It is shaped like a DSLR, with a very deep hand grip, and plenty of dials and controls across the body. The big lens also helps to add to the heft. Now, it should be noted again that the equivalent lens for a DSLR or mirrorless camera –

Use macro focusing to take some nice close-ups
135mm equiv, 1/500sec at f/4, ISO 100

not that it exists – would be absolutely enormous.

The lens doesn't extend too quickly, which can be useful for helping to keep track of the subject you're following. Further to that, another button on the side of the lens can be held down to temporarily retract the lens should your subject exit the frame. Once you've relocated them, you can release the button and the zoom will return to the previous focal length.

You will almost certainly require your other hand to steady the lens while shooting handheld, or you can attach the P1100 to a tripod using the socket on the bottom of the body.

On the back of the camera, other buttons can be found for accessing the menu, playing back images, changing the AF mode and so on. A dedicated video record button is located above the playback button.

For travel, days out and so on, a bridge camera can be an ideal choice
26mm equiv, 1/12000sec at f/2.8, ISO 100

Viewfinder and screen

I'd have liked to have seen Nikon use this opportunity of bringing out a new model to refresh the screen. Re-using the same 921k-dot LCD as the P1000 is fine – it's perfectly usable – but it's old by modern standards.

Better news is the fact that it fully articulates. This is useful for both framing from awkward angles, as well as for video – particularly if you want to shoot pieces to camera. Also, it's handy that you can fold the screen away. I found myself shooting very often using only the viewfinder and having the screen packed away permanently – a bit like shooting with an old film camera, really.

The viewfinder is also the same 0.39in, 2.36m-dot device as in the P1000, too. Again, although this finder isn't particularly exceptional by today's standards, it's perfectly usable and a good way to frame your images. I find it's helpful for steadying the camera when shooting at very long focal lengths, too.

You can also use the viewfinder for quickly checking back images in playback, and for scrolling through menus – this can be useful in bright light where the screen suffers from glare. Or, if you just don't want to take the camera away from your eye while shooting, but just want to quickly adjust a setting or check a shot.

> **'There really is no getting away from the fact that this is one chunky camera'**

Performance

Very long-zoom cameras like this will never give you the best possible image quality. But the P1100 will give you the flexibility to record a variety of different scenarios without having to lug around huge amounts of kit.

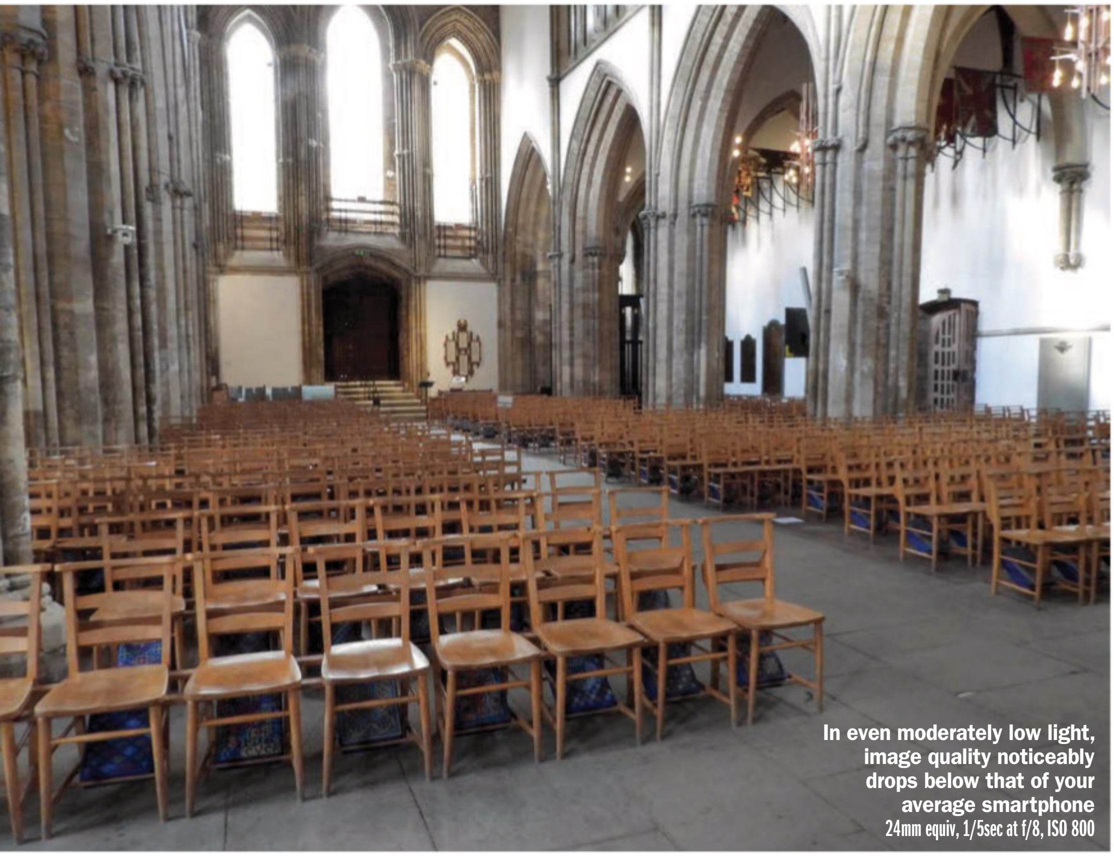
In this case, we already know what to expect, since the sensor and lens are the same as its predecessor. At the wideangle end of the lens, while images are perfectly nice, they're only about as good as you might expect from a mid-range smartphone.

But of course, again, that's not really the point of this camera. If you're mainly going to be shooting from, say, between 24mm and 100mm, it shouldn't be on your shopping list as your phone will likely do a better job, and will also fit in your pocket.

However, what the P1100 can do that your smartphone absolutely can't, is take reasonable shots at much longer focal lengths. I'd argue nobody really needs more than 2000mm, but if you really do want to capture distant subjects, it's useful to have the reach.

At 2000-3000mm, you're not going to get the sharpest images you've ever seen, but you do get a reasonable amount of detail considering the distance you're likely to be standing away. This can be useful for travelling, where you may want the versatility.

It's also somewhat useful for wildlife, but, you will need to learn to work with the quirks of the autofocusing system first. For example, if you're attempting to photograph anything fast-moving, you will be out of luck. But, for reasonably placid or predictable species, you can get some nicely detailed shots, especially with a bit of patience. At very long focal lengths, it's likely you'll find that the subject moving even just a few centimetres will totally alter your composition. In which case, the P1100 can be pretty slow to focus once you've recomposed, but over time you do get used to dealing with this. It's not the best experience you could possibly have, but at the price point for this kind of closeness, it's about what you should expect.



In even moderately low light, image quality noticeably drops below that of your average smartphone
24mm equiv, 1/5sec at f/8, ISO 800

Of course, with completely static subjects, such as buildings, it'll be easier to frame and compose – though you will need to watch out for atmospheric haze in certain situations. Just for fun, I decided to stand on Penarth Pier in South Wales, and photograph Weston Super Mare pier in south-west England, across the Bristol Channel. This is a distance of roughly 11 miles as the crow flies. I ended up with not the best picture you'll ever see, but it's quite remarkable that the pier itself was recognisable – it's certainly not something you can see with your eyes. You can even shoot the moon, if you wish – but I'd definitely recommend a tripod for that.

On the whole, colours are nicely saturated, if perhaps a little on the dull side. Overall exposures are reasonably good, though you are likely to find that if there are any areas of bright light in a scene, you'll get blown highlights. In this respect, most modern smartphones with HDR processing as standard can often do a better job than something like the P1100.

The macro mode comes in useful when photographing close-ups. You can get some good frame-filling shots when using it – the lens can be almost touching the subject and the lens will still focus, so it's good for small subjects such as flowers.

As expected for something with a very small sensor, low light is where the P1100 struggles. Even in mildly dim conditions, having to up the ISO to 800 results in a lot of noise and some loss of detail.

I've found that generally speaking the battery will last a full day of moderate shooting. If you're making a lot of video, or you're at all concerned about running out of juice while travelling, it's worth picking up an extra battery. As you can charge via USB, you could also charge the P1100 via a power bank.

Value for money

At £1,049, you may be thinking that this is very expensive for a 'compact' camera.

Well, it is really, but when you think about what you get, it could also be considered reasonably good value for money.

However, I'd probably also argue that 3000mm is overkill for most photographers, and it also makes the camera very unwieldy. I'd probably recommend the Nikon P950 over it, which is an older model (so no USB-C charging), but is considerably cheaper. It still has a lengthy 83x zoom – probably more than most people will need – but isn't quite as cumbersome.

If you're determined that you need the additional length that the P1100 gives you, and you really are looking for a 'do it all' camera and can live with the compromises, it's not too badly priced overall.

That said, if you already have a P1000 and are considering upgrading, you should be warned that this is really no upgrade at all – unless you're desperate for USB-C charging. You'd almost certainly be better off saving your money and keeping what you've got. Alternatively, you might be able to save a little money by buying a second-hand P1000, and still end up with the same image quality.

Verdict

Amateur Photographer Testbench Recommended ★★★★

THE TECH inside the P1100 is a bit old-hat by modern standards. While Nikon has given it a very mild refresh compared to its predecessor, I'd have liked to have seen a bit more oomph for an upgrade in 2025.

If you already have a P1000, this is barely any upgrade at all. It just gains a USB-C port, so unfortunately that means key specifications such as the sensor, lens, screen and viewfinder are all the same.

As a result, image quality is the same as from a camera that was first released in 2018. It's not bad, it just hasn't moved on. If you already have a P1000, keep it. If you're in the market for a very long zoom bridge camera, consider buying a second-hand one.

Putting that aside for a moment and judging the P1100 in its own right, it does deliver some good shots – especially for those with the patience to get them – and it certainly does things your smartphone can't do.

If you buy the P1100, be prepared to handle a weighty and cumbersome bit of kit. But it's still a lot lighter and smaller than if you wanted the same from a DSLR or mirrorless setup, and a lot cheaper, too.

Overall, the P1100 is still a good buy for those who want a long-zoom bridge camera.

For and against

+ Huge 125x zoom range
+ Fully articulating screen
+ Reasonably good electronic viewfinder
+ Full manual options
+ Raw shooting
– Absolutely enormous, giving clunky handling
– High price
– Screen not touch-sensitive
– Barely any upgrade from predecessor

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As the longest E-mount lens available, this is a great option for wildlife photographers
Sony A7R V, 800mm, 1/2000sec at f/8, ISO 4000

Sony FE 400-800mm F6.3-8 G OSS

This is the longest lens available for Sony E-mount users, but does it really make sense? **Andy Westlake** finds out

While full-frame has established itself as the format of choice amongst many serious photographers, one area where it's generally been at a disadvantage lies with long telephotos, which traditionally have been huge and expensive. Sony is aiming to address this with its FE 400-800mm F6.3-8 G OSS ultra-telephoto zoom. As the longest lens available for E-mount cameras, it's designed for photographers shooting distant subjects such as wildlife, aircraft, or sports. For those who need even more reach, it's compatible with 1.4x and 2x teleconverters.

Like some other recent designs, this lens exploits the fact that mirrorless cameras can focus effectively at rather smaller apertures than DSLRs did. This in turn allows telephotos to be made smaller, lighter and cheaper. However, that doesn't mean the Sony 400-800mm is small and cheap; it's still well over a foot long, weighs in at almost 2.5kg, and costs £2,550. Ultra-telephoto zooms that offer equivalent reach for smaller-format cameras are still much more portable and affordable. So does the lens really make sense?

Features

Sony has used a complex optical design that employs no fewer than 27 elements in 19 groups. This includes 6 elements made from extra-low dispersion (ED) glass, to minimise colour fringing from chromatic aberration.

Autofocus is provided by a pair of linear motors, with full support for shooting at 120fps in both stills and video. The

The lens is impressively sharp, but you'll constantly be fighting other sources of blur
Sony A7R V, 400mm, 1/4000sec at f/6.3, ISO 1250

minimum focus distance ranges from 1.7m at 400mm, to 3.5m at 800mm. A focus limiter switch can be used to restrict this to 8m, in order to minimise hunting.

As befits a lens that will mostly be used outdoors, it boasts dust- and moisture-resistant build, plus a fluorine coating on the front glass to help keep it clean. The lens accepts 105mm filters, and a large cylindrical hood comes in the box.

Engaging APS-C crop mode extends the long end to 1200mm equivalent
Sony A7R V, 800mm, 1/2000sec at f/8, ISO 3200

Build and handling

It should come as no surprise, given its range, to learn that this lens is something of a beast. At 346mm in length and 119.8mm in diameter, it's not something you can wander around with discreetly. Fit the hood, and the length increases to 44cm.

It looks and feels the part, too, with its white-painted barrel. Both the lens and the hood have chunky rubber bumpers at the front to protect against knocks. The lens has its own strap lugs too, which you'll need to use, rather than hanging it off a camera.

Sony quotes the weight as 2,475g, but again, that's for the lens alone. Add in the hood and caps, and, you're looking at carrying around 2,785g in total. You'll probably want to invest in a large, comfortable backpack.

A tripod foot is built-in, with both 1/4in and 3/8in threads. It can be used quite comfortably as a handle for carrying the lens, but it doesn't have an Arca-Swiss dovetail profile that would allow it to be fixed directly to many tripod and monopod heads. The foot rotates freely through 360° but it's not removable.

The broad zoom ring is placed towards the front of the lens, and I was really impressed by how quick and smooth the internal zoom mechanism is to operate. You can get from one end to the other with a 90-degree twist, and using a single finger. That's a huge advantage over extending zoom designs. The manual focus ring rotates smoothly with no end stops, and three focus hold buttons are provided for shooting both vertically and horizontally.

Unlike most of Sony's other recent lenses, there's no aperture ring. But you'll probably spend most of your time shooting in shutter priority with the aperture wide open, so it's no great loss. An array of switches on one side controls the autofocus and image stabilisation systems, with all the expected options.

I used the lens with the Sony Alpha A7R V, and I'd put it very much towards the limit of what I'd be comfortable with shooting handheld for any great length of time. I put it through its paces by shooting motorcycle racing, and wildlife in my local parks. For the latter, mobility and flexibility are important, and there I was happy bringing it up to my eye, firing off short bursts, and dropping it back down by my side. However, with motorsports, where I was generally shooting in one place for a while before moving on, I preferred to use a monopod.

Autofocus

As I'd expect from a modern Sony lens, the FE 200-800mm F6.3-8 provides extremely impressive autofocus. In good light, it's fast,

You really can zoom in tightly on your subjects. This is a 6MP crop from a 60MP frame
Sony A7R V, 400mm, 1/60sec at f/8, ISO 100

silent, and accurate, essentially doing whatever the camera asks of it. Unsurprisingly, though, the small aperture means that it slows down once the light levels drop. I suspect that it might struggle with such things as indoor sports.

I used the lens almost exclusively in continuous AF mode, and shooting with subject detection for vehicles, birds or animals as appropriate. As long as I gave the camera a moment to pick up and start tracking a subject, I got a very good percentage of in-focus shots. Overall, I felt the performance was probably limited more by the camera than the lens.

It's worth noting that if you're shooting very small subjects such as birds at long distance, the AF system might struggle to pick them up. If you're using a full-frame camera, then switching to APS-C crop mode can genuinely help here, as it effectively magnifies the sensor readout for autofocus.

Performance

So how did the lens perform for me in real-world use? Usually, at this point I'd write a detailed image quality analysis across all focal lengths and apertures. But in a way, that's only of peripheral interest here. That's not to say that the lens isn't sharp, but rather that in real-world shooting, its sharpness will hardly ever be the limiting factor on the overall image quality. Instead you'll constantly be fighting against image degradation from such things as high-ISO noise, subject motion, and camera shake.

With this lens, you're likely to be spending a lot of time shooting moving subjects. So chances are, you'll frequently be setting fast shutter speeds of at least 1/1000sec to freeze their motion. But with the relatively slow aperture of f/8 at 800mm, you'll then find yourself using high sensitivities of ISO 1600 or more even on a sunny day. If you need faster shutter speeds or to stop down further for more depth of field, that will mean boosting the ISO even further.

At this point, your raw processing skills increasingly come into play, in terms of exploiting noise reduction, clarity and texture sliders to generate the sharpest-looking images.

If you do manage to get yourself in a position to shoot at low ISOs, you will, however, find the lens is impressively sharp, even on the A7R V's 60MP sensor. Shooting wildlife can be a tough test, but I found that the lens resolves fine, low-contrast details of feathers and fur with ease. This sharpness remains important even when you're shooting at high ISOs, as it gives noise reduction software the best possible data to work with.

If you look at uncorrected raw files, you'll see noticeable pincushion distortion throughout the zoom range. But this doesn't really matter in real-world shooting, as you're unlikely to be shooting geometrically precise compositions that might reveal it. Distortion will usually be automatically corrected by the camera in JPEG files, too, and by raw processing software once the requisite lens profiles are available. There's also marked vignetting at 400mm and f/8, but the easiest remedy for this is simply to keep in-camera shading compensation enabled.

Thankfully image blur from camera shake shouldn't be much of a problem, as I found the optical stabilisation to be very impressive indeed. I was able to get some sharp shots handheld at ludicrously low shutter speeds around 1/60sec, even when zoomed all the way in to 800mm. But you do need to remember to switch the IS to mode 2 for panning shots at slower shutter speeds so that the lens's stabilisation system isn't constantly fighting against your camera movement.

Verdict

Amateur Photographer Testbench Recommended ★★★★½

HAVING spent some time shooting with the Sony FE 400-800mm F6.3-8 G OSS, I find myself with mixed feelings about the lens. It has a great deal in its favour – it focuses quickly and quietly, it's really easy to zoom, the stabilisation is incredibly effective, and crucially, the optics are excellent. That 800mm focal length means you really can get up-close to your subject, too. But it's larger and heavier than I'd like, and its short zoom range means that it can be surprisingly inflexible in use.

Indeed, my biggest problem with this lens was something I never expected; quite often, you can't zoom out wide enough. I think you'd often need to pair it with a 100-400mm, which I guess is what Sony has in mind. But that adds even more weight.

That small aperture can be limiting too, as it requires you to use high ISOs pretty much all the time when shooting anything that moves. As a result, this is very much a lens for shooting in bright light. Personally, though, I wasn't too bothered by needing high ISOs, given the capabilities of AI noise-reduction software.

In conclusion, this is a really impressive lens, just as long as you can live with its limitations. I think it could be an excellent choice for specific subjects, such as wildlife or airshows. It's still not as practical and affordable as ultra-telephoto zooms for smaller formats, though. It's clearly a niche product, but for some users it could fit that niche perfectly.

Data file

Price	£2,550
Filter diameter	105mm
Elements	27
Groups	19
Diaphragm blades	11, circular
Aperture	f/6.3-8
Minimum focus	1.7-3.5m
Length	346mm
Diameter	119.8mm
Weight	2,475g
Lens mount	Sony E (full-frame)
Included accessories	Caps, hood, strap

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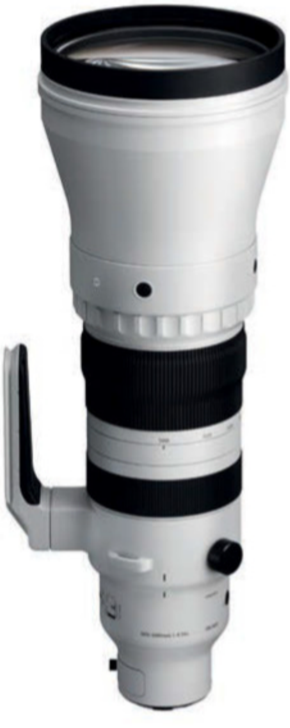
This long, large-aperture telezoom is ideal for wildlife photography
Panasonic Lumix S1RII, 600mm, 1/1250sec at f/8, ISO 640

Sigma 300-600mm F4 DG OS Sports

It has a big body and a big price, too. But with excellent image quality and handling, this telephoto zoom is great value for money, says **Damien Demolder**



The problem with long lenses is that they always come with compromises. I very often find that an 'incredible' focal length doesn't get me quite as close to the subject as I had imaged it would. Distant beasts still look disappointingly distant and small in the frame. Then there's the sliding maximum aperture that means we need ISO 6400 even on a bright day to combine decent sharpness with a shutter speed that freezes the action. The long lenses that circumvent these issues then run into the additional nuisances of size, weight and cost. It's annoying that even in 2025 we still can't have it all.

This new Sigma 300-600mm F4 DG OS Sports lens is another that can't give us it all. But with its very useful zoom range, a constant and fast maximum aperture, and a semi-affordable £5,899 price tag it may come close – so long as it maintains the company's recent form for excellent image quality. Sigma claims the lens gives us the quality of a fixed-focal-length

The autofocus system will keep up with whatever the camera asks
Panasonic S1RII, 600mm, 1/2500sec at f/6.3, ISO 800

© JOSHUA CONNELLY

lens but in a zoom, so it's setting our expectations pretty high from the off.

Features

The Sigma 300-600mm F4 DG OS is a lens designed for full-frame mirrorless cameras, and it sits in the 'Sports' segment of the company's optical offering. It's likely that the first thing you will notice about this model is that it is quite big, so let's deal with that first. If carrying weight is an issue for you, a Sherpa might be employed to haul the 3,985g kit when you aren't using it, and again to hold it to your eye when you are. It is a heavy lens, but actually not quite as big as it at first looks. Well, it is, but it's the lens hood that makes it look particularly massive/impressive.

The lens itself is 467.9mm long with a barrel diameter of 167mm at the extreme end, but the detachable lens hood is responsible for a great deal of the appearance of bulk. With a length of 165mm and a diameter of 184mm, a substantial birthday cake for eight hungry children could easily be baked inside the hood if you lined it with grease-proof paper. Though it is big it really isn't heavy, so it doesn't have a dramatic impact on the balance of the setup.

Here the lens has delivered a lovely shot directly into the sun
Panasonic S1RII, 600mm, 1/8000sec at f/5.6, ISO 400

The weight of the lens can be accounted for by the solid construction of the magnesium alloy body and the 28 elements that are used inside it. We get 6 elements in Sigma's fluorite-like FLD glass and one in Super Low Dispersion glass, and an iris that features 13 blades to create a rounded aperture. While the front element measures over 140mm, users will be glad to know Sigma has incorporated a rear-filter system so 40.5mm circular filters can be loaded at the exit end of the optical path using the Sigma RFH-21 filter holder – that's unique to this lens.

The maximum aperture is f/4 at all focal length settings, and the smallest aperture on offer is a modest f/22. Obviously not a macro lens, our greatest reproduction ratio is 1:6, which is achieved at the 470mm focal length setting. At the 300mm mark the closest we can focus is 2.8m, and at 600mm that extends to 4.5m.

The lens comes in a choice of L or Sony E mounts, and is equipped as standard with a tripod foot, a shoulder strap, the hood and the filter holder, and a dinner-plate-sized lens cap. The L-mount version of the lens is compatible with Sigma's 1.4x and 2x teleconverters, taking the maximum effective focal length to 840mm and 1200mm, respectively.

Build and handling

Perhaps in acknowledgement that this is a big and heavy lens, Sigma has done everything it can to make it as easy to use as possible. The Arca Swiss style tripod foot is substantial, robust and padded, which makes carrying it and fitting it to a tripod a whole lot easier than it could have been. When handholding the lens, which you will do at some point, you'll find all the controls you need right where your hand is.

While the lens might be

That long focal length lets you get close-ups of timid subjects
Panasonic S1RII, 600mm, 1/1000sec at f/8, ISO 250

ALL PICTURES © DAMIEN DEMOLDER EXCEPT WHERE STATED

> ‘It isn’t too much of a hardship to close the aperture by a stop to get dramatically better sharpness and contrast’

615mm long with the lens hood attached, all the controls you’ll need when shooting are concentrated within a 60mm range. Here you’ll find the zoom ring, the function buttons and the new function ring. Function buttons we have seen before, and on this model we have four of them that we can customise to our liking – AF on or AF lock, in most cases.

The function ring, though, is new with this 300-600mm, and gives us a choice of two functions. Via a physical switch on the barrel we can either leave the ring inactive, use it to pull the focus back quickly to a set position, or turn it to transition focus slowly between two points during filming. While the function button options are chosen via the camera’s menu system from a list of 36 possible functions (in Lumix cameras at least), the function of the ring is limited by its physical switch to only two.

I can’t help feeling Sigma could make a bit more of this ring if its operation could be controlled in-camera.

At the slimmer end of the barrel we have the usual collection of image stabilisation options, a three-way focus distance limiter, AF/MF switch and the switch to turn on and off the bleep. We also have the custom mode switch that allows us to quickly engage a collection of settings around OS, AF speed and focus ranges we have established via Sigma’s Optimization Pro software.

Performance

When any company declares that their zoom lens is as good as any fixed lens of the corresponding focal length I’m delighted. It’s such a claim as to be a red rag to a bull for a lens reviewer. Rarely is the claim fully justified. This case is challenging as we are looking at very long focal lengths and a wide aperture, and I have to ask myself whether we would expect to get the best from even a 600mm fixed focal-length lens when used at f/4. I suspect that we would experience similar resolution loss with any such lens when compared to the drop in quality we get when using the Sigma 300-600mm wide open at f/4. Fortunately ‘wide open’ here is pretty wide for a telezoom, and it isn’t too much of a hardship to close the aperture by a stop to get dramatically better sharpness and contrast. Similarly we won’t get the best from the lens when it’s closed to f/22, but f/16 is very good.

So we need to work between f/5.6 and f/16, which gives us plenty of options across that four-stop range. I found f/7.1 and f/8 particularly good, and kept the aperture in that area most of the time.

At these settings resolution is exceptional, and you won’t experience a hint of colour fringing or aberrations to impact sharpness right to the corner of the frame. Vignetting is eliminated either by the optical design or its partnership with camera’s firmware, and there’s no sign of distortion. And the High-response Linear Actuator that runs the AF system is speedy and … responsive. The lens finds the subject quickly and is able to track as fast as the Lumix S1RII camera can. Sigma claims the Optical Stabilization system gives us 5.5 stops at 600mm, and I have no reason to doubt that – in stills or video mode. This is a top-flight performance.

Verdict

SOME lenses are just very exciting to use, and this Sigma 300-600mm F4 DG OS is one of them. The focal range is exciting but so are the results it produces. We can relax when shooting as we don’t need to keep an eye out for certain settings or situations that will degrade the image – just avoid f/4 and f/22 when you can. The lens is more of an effort to use than a 50mm standard lens, and it takes more preparation and energy, but Sigma respects those extra exertions with its own endeavours to make the lens easier to use and with its labours to ensure when our focus is true our pictures are filled with detail.

At almost £5,900 this isn’t going to be an impulse purchase and most of us won’t be able to justify the cost. But the price alone doesn’t make this an expensive lens – just one that costs a lot. With its combination of zoom range and fast aperture it actually presents very good value in comparison to the other lenses in this area, and if this is the kind of lens you need, it is a really compelling proposition.

I’ve loved using it, and loved looking at what it has done to my wildlife photography. They say a new lens isn’t going to improve your pictures, but ‘they’ haven’t tried the Sigma 300-600mm F4 DG OS Sports.

Data file

Price £5,899
Filter diameter 40.5
Lens elements 28
Groups 21
Diaphragm blades 13
Aperture f/4 - f/22
Minimum focus 280-450cm
Length 467.9mm
Diameter 167mm
Weight 3,970g
Lens mount L-mount, Sony E
Included accessories Caps, hood, tripod foot

Amateur Photographer Testbench Recommended ★★★★½

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LETTER OF THE WEEK

LETTER OF THE WEEK WINS A SAMSUNG 256GB PRO PLUS MICRO SDXC CARD. NOTE: PRIZE APPLIES TO UK AND EU RESIDENTS ONLY

The social side

The letter from David Price about 'Clubs in danger' is interesting. I am a member of a small club in Merthyr Tydfil, South Wales, and we are just about recovering from the Covid dip in activity. But while we are not seeing younger people at our club, I have little doubt about the social and well-being value of the gatherings for our members.

In this era anyone can learn lots about camera skills from many different sources, not least YouTube and other platforms. We don't need to leave our sofas.

Working out a niche for a club is important. Not unlike the battle to 'save the local High Street', perhaps the focus should be on the social gathering offered and not just the camera use, the next competition or a debate about kit.

I am lucky enough to pay a Patreon membership and have monthly meet-ups online with others. That feels equivalent to a club but I can attend from anywhere that has an internet link.

I ask myself how many photography clubs meet in clubs, coffee bars, pubs or other social settings? Or like us, do you insist on meeting in a community hall?

It would be interesting to hear more about how other local camera clubs achieve success? It is also why the club reviews and insights that AP provides are valuable.

Martin Eaglestone

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AI in APOY

I'd like some clarification regarding the use of AI generative tools, such as the one alongside the heal and clone tools in Lightroom Classic, for entries in APOY 2025. I'm referring to the use of the AI generative tool for removing small features from the overall image – such as spots or a distracting line at the edge of the frame etc, in much the same way as you'd use the clone or heal tool. I am not referring to the use of generative fill to add objects or people etc which were not in the original photo. I don't feel your terms and conditions make this entirely clear.

Graeme Youngson

The rules are intended to allow for minor enhancement but not for substantial alterations, but there will always be a degree of subjectivity in where we draw the line. We will take another look at the rules to see if we can make them clearer.

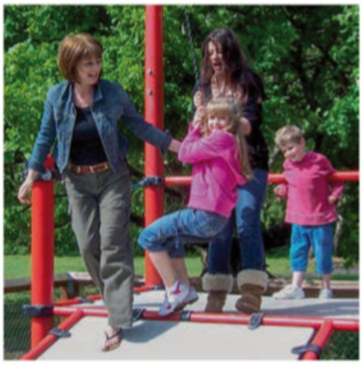
Right to worry

I think David Price is right to worry about the future of camera clubs. The most popular subject for photography is surely people, but in my experience such pictures are not welcomed at clubs by members or judges.

I enclose an example. The judge said, 'It's one for the family album but is it a competition picture?.' I asked the members if they agreed with this sentiment, and many did. I'm not claiming this is a great photo; there's room for improvement definitely, but I think it's quite well composed and captures a 'decisive moment'.

I was encouraged to join a camera club by a friend who said 'it would improve my photography', but how can it if my favourite subject is not welcome? And how will clubs encourage others to join if such a popular genre is excluded? **Alan Cox**

I agree that this is not a competition-winning image, though it's clearly a nice moment if you know the people in the picture. But anecdotally many clubs do seem fixated with pictorialism and aren't interested in pictures of people, however well executed they may be. I would be interested to hear from other readers on this topic.



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Alan Cox sent us this lovely picture and queries why such people pictures don't seem to be welcomed by club members or judges

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THIS WEEK WE ASKED...

What was your first camera and do you still use it?

You said...

Kevin Eastwood
As a press teenager I had a 110 camera and then I seem to remember a Kodak disc camera. The first proper camera I had when I was earning money was a Yashica 230AF.

Gareth Hughes
Halina 35x – terrible but still have one in the collection.

Carole Garside
Kodak Instamatic 100 (1972). Long gone, but I still have the first shots taken with it.

Geoff Brown Photography @Geebee1963
First camera was a Halina Simplette, not an idea what happened to it. My first proper camera was a Yashica MC Electro, and my very first SLR was a Yashica TL Electro; both I've still got, but both need their light seals replacing and servicing – I'd love to use them again one day.

Philip Sykes
My first camera cost six shillings (30p in today's money) in 1964, from Woolworths. It used a roll film (I forget the number) that was plentiful even though production had been discontinued (so I was later informed by a photography historian). The camera was all plastic, including the lens but it took good enough pictures to inspire me to buy a better camera. These days I mainly use a Sony Alpha series camera, though I do have several others.

Allan Dixon
My first proper film camera was a Praktica MTL 3. I think it broke the day after the guarantee ran out. I also had a Mamiya C3 TLR that I bought second-hand from the local wedding guy. Used it for years and I still have it. It's just a ornament now as the aperture blades have seized and the lenses have been destroyed by dampness.

Klare Cousins
A Canon Snappy was the first camera I was given as a kid – it's around somewhere – so you could say that was my first camera but the first camera I bought myself was a Canon EOS 550D and yes, I still use it now. It's been a lot of places with me.

Graeme Youngson
A Brownie Twin 20, which for a very cheap camera was unique in having both an eye-level and a waist-level viewfinder. Haven't used it since the 1960s but I still have it sitting on my desk.

John Bell-Young @yanitoman
Olympus Pen, bought in the 1960s and still going strong – uses split negatives.

UCPhoto @UCPhoto_pics
Seems we've a bunch of younger folks responding. My first camera was a Rolleiflex TLR that my dad brought back from WWII. He wasn't a journalist. I don't know how he acquired it, but it was in perfect mechanical and cosmetic condition. Currently shooting with Nikon D500 and D7200.

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3 Legged Thing Alana Docz kit

Andy Westlake tests a large and sturdy carbon-fibre monopod kit

- £129.99 monopod only
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- 3leggedthing.com

If you shoot a lot of wildlife photography, chances are you'll end up with a large telephoto lens. And while these are getting increasingly manageable, many are still too heavy to use handheld for extended periods. This is where a monopod comes in, to take the weight so you can keep on shooting.

3 Legged Thing's Alana is a 5-section carbon-fibre monopod with quick twist locks for adjusting its height. It's reasonably light at 643g, with a travel-friendly 45cm folded length. It can be bought either on its own, or with the Docz tripod stabiliser. There's a choice of either an all-black finish or Grey, which has attractive dark metallic-green metalwork.

Used on its own, the Alana is a straightforward and robust support. Large twist locks make it easy to set to your required length, even when wearing gloves. It'll hold a camera comfortably at eye level for photographers up to at least 6ft (1.8m) tall.

I'd recommend getting the Docz tripod base, though, as this adds useful extra stability and versatility. It simply screws on in place of the standard foot, which means it's very quick and easy to install or remove. The tripod legs fold up out of the way when they're not needed, revealing another rubber foot so you can keep on using the monopod.

A ball-and-socket joint at the base provides flexibility for shooting on uneven ground, while also allowing easy panning and a degree of tilt. Twisting the Docz's foot adjusts the friction of the ball joint, while a screw collar allows you to lock the monopod in the vertical position. It's all really well designed.

I tested the Alana kit with several cameras and telephoto lenses. The heaviest and longest setup I used was the Sony A7R V and FE 400-800mm F6.3-8 G OSS lens, at about 3.5kg. It took this weight with ease – indeed I'm confident it would support considerably weightier loads.

Verdict

If you shoot a lot with large telephoto lenses and would like a lightweight yet sturdy monopod to take the strain, then the 3 Legged Thing Alana will do the job exceptionally well. It provides excellent support, folds down short, and should be tall enough for most photographers. The Docz kit is well worth getting, too.

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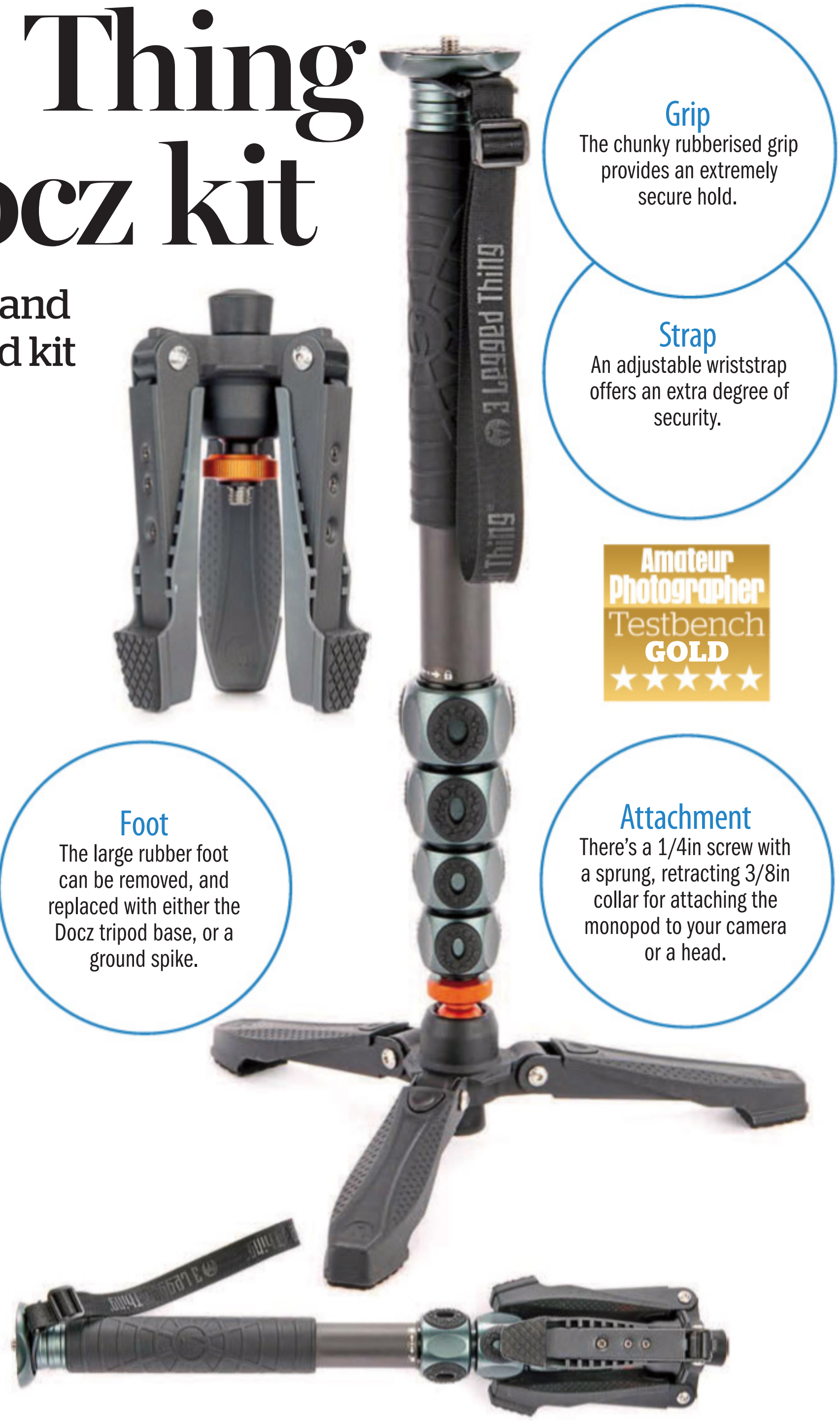


Grip
The chunky rubberised grip provides an extremely secure hold.

Strap
An adjustable wriststrap offers an extra degree of security.

Foot
The large rubber foot can be removed, and replaced with either the Docz tripod base, or a ground spike.

Attachment
There's a 1/4in screw with a sprung, retracting 3/8in collar for attaching the monopod to your camera or a head.

Amateur Photographer Testbench GOLD ★★★★★

At a glance

- 5-section carbon-fibre monopod
- 1.58m maximum height
- 44.8cm folded length
- 643g weight (1.17kg with Docz)
- 60kg max load (20kg with Docz)
- Available in Darkness or Grey

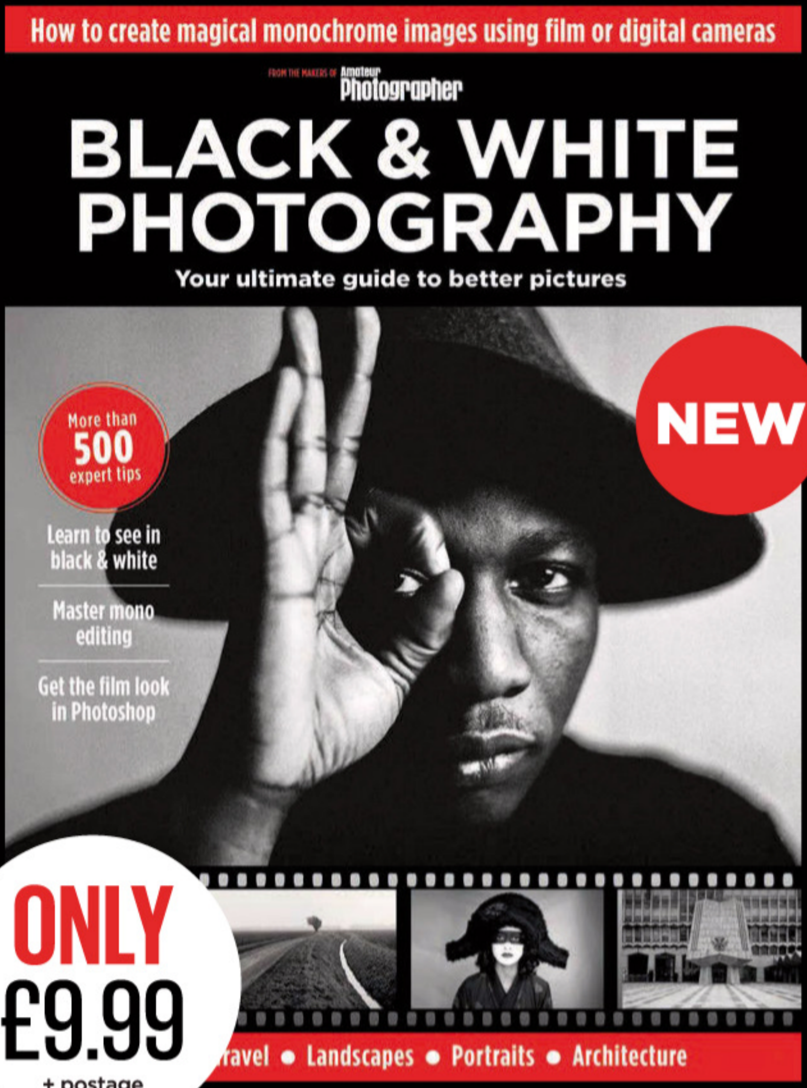
MATCHED HEAD

3 Legged Thing's matched Airhed Trinity pan-and-tilt head has an Arca-Swiss compatible quick-release clamp and comes in a choice of three finishes – Darkness (black), Copper (orange) and Moss (green) – for £79.99. However, wildlife photographers might prefer the SpeediGimbal (right) which provides excellent mobility and flexibility. See speedigimbal.co.uk

SpeediGimbal

From the makers of Amateur Photographer magazine

THE NEW MUST-BUY FOR ANY PHOTOGRAPHER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A changing world

American photographer Dudley Edmondson grew up with a shortage of prominent black role models in photography, natural history and conservation – something he's worked to rectify for future generations in his work. He spoke to **Graeme Green**

The natural world is in crisis, facing multiple threats, including climate change, pollution, habitat and biodiversity loss, problems facing every person who lives on Earth.

But when it comes to exploring solutions or making decisions, too often it's just the voices of 'white males in lab coats' that are paid attention to, says the American photographer, film-maker and author Dudley Edmondson.

That was the motivation for Edmondson's latest book, *People The Planet Needs Now*, for which he created 'environmental portraits' and told the stories of conservationists, scientists and activists from across the United States, all of whom are Black, Indigenous or other People of Colour (BIPOC), working on issues ranging from contaminated water to climate change or encouraging

people to connect with and appreciate the great outdoors.

Born in 1962 in Columbus, Ohio, Edmondson moved to Duluth, Minnesota, in 1989, his interest in birdwatching leading him into a 35-year career in wildlife and nature photography. But as a black photographer, he saw no other non-white photographers who were working in wildlife photography or filmmaking in the United States.

The area of natural history has historically been dominated by white males, not only in the US, but in the UK, across Africa and elsewhere – and it continues to be. Edmondson's 2006 book, *Black And Brown Faces In America's Wild Places*, set out to highlight role models working in the great outdoors for the US's African American community. During the Obama administration, the book secured him an invitation to the White House for Barack Obama's signing of America's Great Outdoors Initiative.

Here, he talks to me about role models, 'environmental portraits', and his favourite US locations for nature photography…

AP: What made you want to work on your book, *People The Planet Needs Now*?

DE: Part of it had to do with the fact that we don't normally associate concerns about science and the environment with black people, people of colour or indigenous people. We tend to look to white males in lab coats to tell us about science. I wanted to do a mix of scientists, environmental activists, and social justice activists together in one book, because people of colour are usually the folks who suffer the most when the environment goes bad. We're usually on the frontlines on things to do with industrial waste, pollution… I felt like we needed to hear from these folks. Being a person of colour myself, it all made sense to me.

AP: Why have people of colour been overlooked or ignored?

DE: People of European ancestry seem to have rejected their connection to the environment – many of them seem to want to see nature and the environment as an adversary, and they have to be constantly controlling, containing and commodifying it. People of the global majority don't see things that way. They see themselves and nature as being one.

For whatever reason, we're not at the table. It seems like people don't care what people of colour think.

I feel that most of the practical, sustainable and workable solutions are going to come from indigenous people, because they're still connected to the land. They've been stewards of the land, in Australia, in the Americas… They never severed their ties with the natural world. They've worked the natural world into their culture, their history, their ceremonies, and never forgot that nature makes their lives possible.

AP: What did you want to get across with the portraits in the book?

Left: Great grey owl in a snowstorm

Above: White Ibis feeding on a Florida beach

Below: Dudley photographing in the wilderness. Photo by Nancy LaTour Edmondson

© NANCY LATOUR EDMONDSON

DE: It was important to create an image that people could have an emotional response to. I wanted people to have a connection to the person through the imagery, so they could then connect to that person's story and feel some empathy or concern for their plight.

AP: Were the portraits a collaborative process?
DE: I don't want people to be misrepresented through the words I write or the images I take, so there's always collaboration. I always give the subject the opportunity to have some input. I want people to feel comfortable. I work with people in spaces they're familiar with. I call them environmental portraits. I don't typically pull people out of their environments. I prefer to photograph people in the outdoors, rather than in a studio or a setting that's recreated. That's a way to give a sense of who the person is and what they're passionate about through the images.

AP: How did you get started in photography?
DE: I've been a birder for 45 years. Photography was initially a way to keep track of the birds I was seeing. I've always been into nature, and I had a good career as a professional nature photographer, back in the days of film and slide transparencies.

AP: Were there any black wildlife or nature photographers in the US that you looked up to when you were starting out?
DE: To my knowledge, there were none. I don't know any of any renowned people of colour or black nature and wildlife photographers that are of the Jim Brandenburg or Art Wolfe type. I don't know why there are so few, if any, black wildlife or nature photographers.

In my day, I looked up to Gordon Parks and other black photographers. There are lots of people I still admire, like David Attenborough, or Marlin Perkins in the US. A lot of the portrait photographers or nature photographers I looked up to for inspiration were white photographers. I wanted to copy their styles in the beginning but I've developed my own style now.

AP: Why does that lack of black high-profile wildlife and nature photographers matter?
DE: For some reason, we seem to have sold the world on the idea that in order to be a successful nature photographer you need to be a white European male. I was watching a show on YouTube recently – they had a black guy driving them around on safari, and all the people in the vehicle were white. They had Sony A1s and 600mm lenses. It seems that there aren't many non-white role models. I've tried throughout my career to be a role model for black people and people of colour in outdoors photography and nature photography. I know there are a lot more novice and semi-professional photographers now in the United States, and a number of Instagram and Facebook groups for people of colour who do nature photography. But people who make a living at it… I don't know anybody here other than myself.

AP: After your previous book *Black And Brown Faces in America's Wild Places* was published, you were invited to the White House for the signing of America's Great Outdoors Initiative. Did you meet Obama?
DE: No, I didn't. I was in the audience when he signed legislation, but I didn't have the press credentials to be in the first few rows. I did pass a copy of the book to people in his administration and I met the Secretary of the Interior and gave him a copy personally.

AP: What are some of your favourite locations across the US for photography?
DE: I tend to like Arches National Park and Canyonlands. The state of Utah has a lot of amazing, beautiful national parks, and that's one of my favourite areas for landscape photography. For birds and wildlife, there is Bosque del Apache National Wildlife Refuge in New Mexico. The southern US is a place I frequently visit. The Rio Grande valley of Texas has all kinds of remarkable birds, including species from South America and Mexico, such as the resplendent quetzal, gray hawk, and the great kiskadee.

Top: Corina Newsome, American ornithologist, birder and science communicator

Above: Indigenous Elder Ricky DeFoe

Facing page, bottom: Bohemian waxwing feeding on spoiled apples

I do a lot of photography in my own backyard these days. Unfortunately, the market for nature photography has changed drastically these days, with so many people doing photography. I used to know every photographer I was competing against but those days are gone. Nature photography is a national pastime – you can't make much money in it any more. I've switched mainly to video production, working as a cinematographer for a local firm in Minnesota.

AP: What's your approach with photographing birds?
DE: For most of my career, I was assigned to get bird portraits for field guides, with identifiable field marks. But these days I really try to capture action and the behaviour of birds. I try to show them in a unique, beautiful way.

AP: One of your popular photos shows a great grey owl in a Minnesota snowstorm. Was that a difficult shot to get?
DE: Winter is one of my favourite times to photograph birds. With that shot, I just happened to be in the right place at the right time, in a place we call the Sax-Zim Bog, a boreal peat bog area that is famous for wintering owls and other birds: the rough-legged hawk, northern hawk-owl, pine grosbeak and more. They were relatively easy to find if you spent time in the area. I found that particular bird, with the red osier dogwood, which is the red colour behind. I shot quite a series on that, and it made for a gorgeous photo. Apparently, the world loves that photo, as we sold over 10,000 dollars worth of images of that photo, which blew me away.

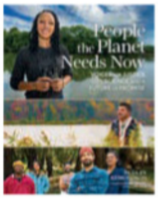
AP: Are there concerns for national parks and protected areas now under President Trump?
DE: Yes. America did something unique in protecting hundreds of millions of acres of public land. I feel that everything is up for sale now, because we have an administration that's really interested in commodifying everything. Trump has put in a Secretary of the Interior who is interested in selling off land leases and oil leases for a lot of our public lands. There is great concern about keeping these places protected so that people can visit them for wilderness.

AP: What role can photography play in helping on wildlife issues and conservation?
DE: I feel that not everybody has the economic means to travel the world and see amazing animals and beautiful landscapes. Photography is a great form of communication – to communicate the beauty of nature with the world and the plight of many species of animals. Nature photography also creates more nature photographers. Not a year goes by without someone coming up to me at a talk or presentation to ask me how they can get started as a nature photographer. That's down to photographers who have spent a large amount of our lives photographing nature and communicating to the world what is out there for people to see and experience.

Top: Drew Lanham, wildlife biologist

Above: Chad Brown on a ridge above camp in Alaska inside Arctic National Wildlife Refuge

AP: What project are you working on next?
DE: I'm working on a number of film projects and documentaries in the state of Minnesota, and photography projects. I want to do some portraits of people of colour in the great outdoors who are doing the things they do, such as mountain climbers, white water rafters, scientists… I want to continue to push the idea that nature and the environment is for everybody, and that people of colour are part of that.



People The Planet Needs Now: Voices For Justice, Science And A Future Of Promise by Dudley Edmondson, published by Adventure Publications, is available from Waterstones for £21.99. See **dudleyedmondson.com** and Instagram **@dudley.edmondson**

APOY Inspiration

If you're planning to enter our **People and Portraits** round, take these tips from three of last year's top ten photographers

Peyman Naderi, Iran

Sony A7R III, 24-70mm at 70mm, 1/160sec at f/5.6, ISO 64

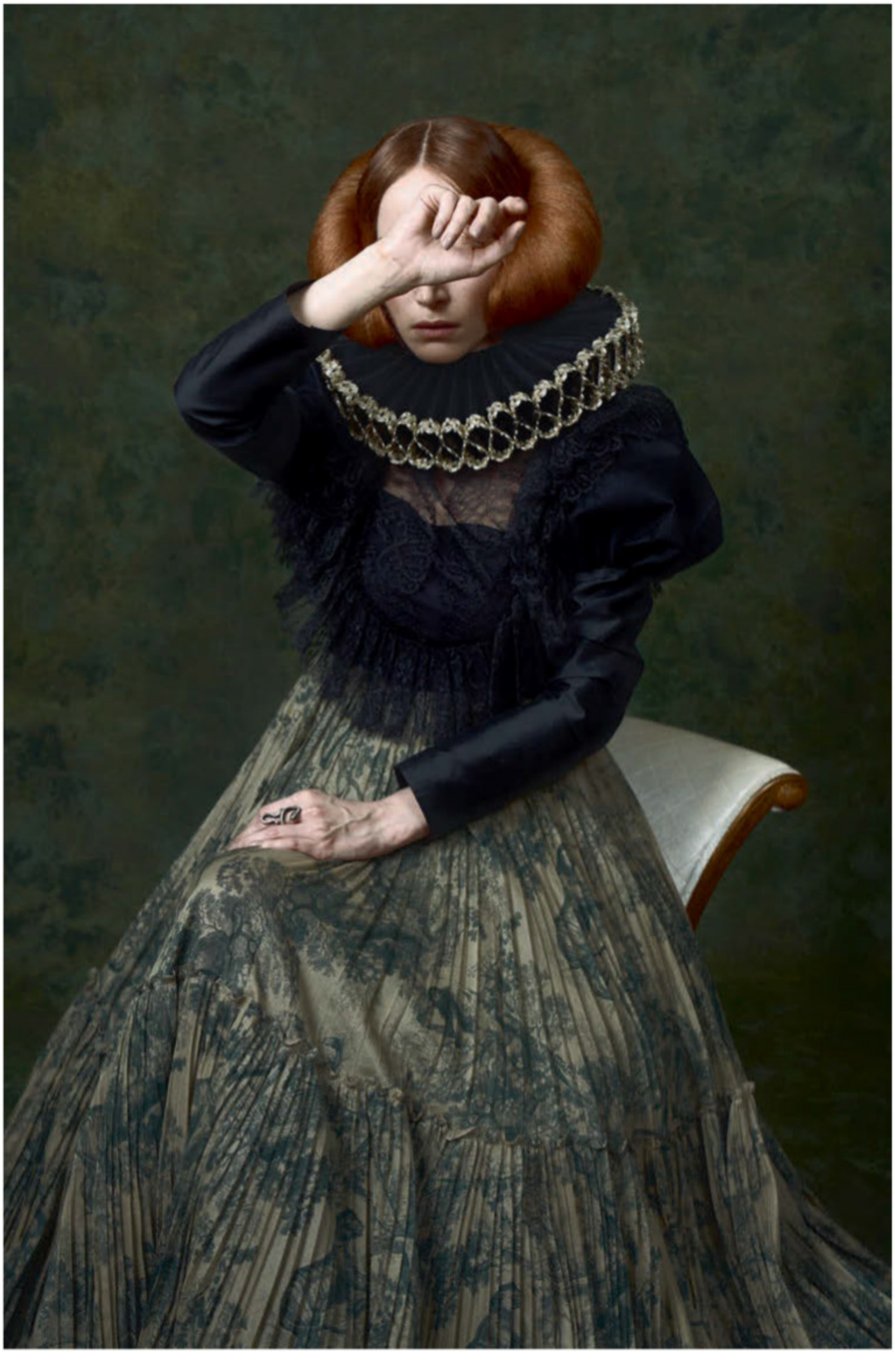
Peyman came fourth in last year's People round with his stunning studio portrait, which is titled 'Lorca'. The judges said: 'This is stunning, with the costume and hair contributing to the scene as much as the model and pose. It's like an imagined still from a fairytale or a myth, and the audience is invited to construct their own story.'

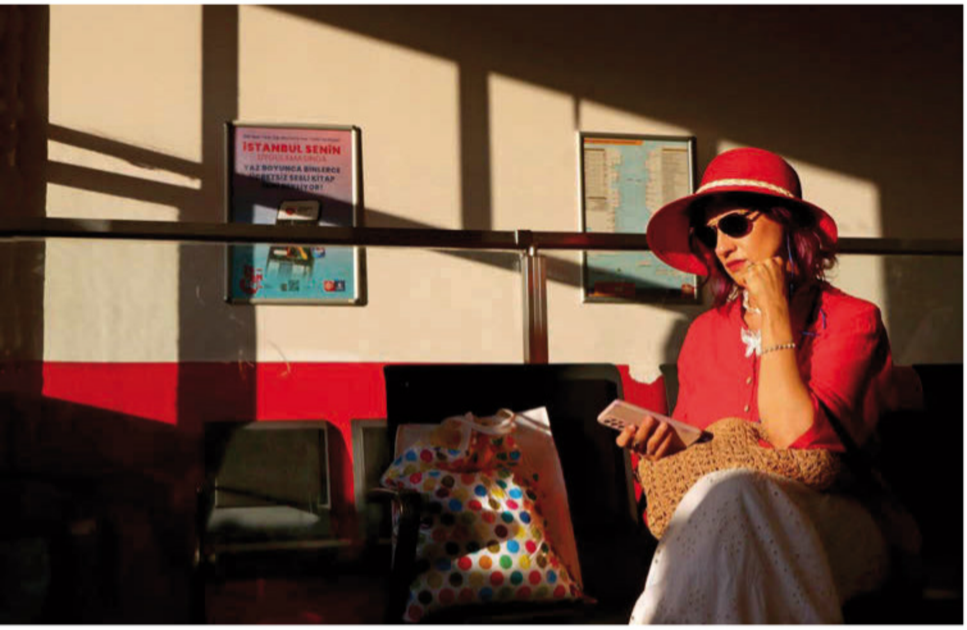
Peyman says: 'Lorca is the story of a girl who lived through a period of history but was never seen. Though immensely artistic, she concealed herself from the world, guarding her identity in silence until a moment of quiet rebellion allowed her to be remembered on her own terms. This image is my interpretation of that moment. I imagined her inner world, her reluctance, and her strength, and set out to shape it visually so others could witness the feeling I carried in my mind.

'The portrait is heavily inspired by the aesthetics of 16th- and 17th-century European painting, especially in its mood and posture. I focused on traditional compositional structure, using a textured, painterly backdrop to evoke timelessness. The costume especially the elaborate ruff, lace, and sculptural sleeves was styled to feel both historical and metaphorical, representing concealment and identity.

'Lighting was critical in building the atmosphere: I used a large softbox positioned at a 45° angle to the subject's left side, emulating the soft directional light of old master portraits. A white reflector on the opposite side subtly lifted the shadows, preserving emotional depth while retaining a sculptural quality on her face and hands.

'Her raised arm wasn't posed, it was a spontaneous gesture during the shoot, and I kept it because it captured exactly what Lorca means to me: a woman who hides and reveals herself in the same breath.'





Laura Allegri, Italy

Canon EOS M50 Mark II, 18-150mm at 29mm, 1/800sec at f/10, ISO 500

Laura's 'Woman in Red' was placed sixth in 2024's People category. The judges said: 'The hat, the cardigan, the half-painted wall behind, the dots on the woman's bag and even the poster's typography all combine to create a coherent whole. Although it looks like a candid image, the photograph could just as easily have been set up, which makes it all the more interesting.'

Laura says: 'I took this photo on a late summer afternoon in Istanbul. A woman sat down in front of me in the waiting area for the ferry that would take us both back to the opposite side of the Bosphorus. I had my camera resting on my lap and, noticing her quiet elegance and how her red outfit perfectly matched the background tones, I discreetly took the shot.

'It's a candid image and I'm glad she didn't notice me because the natural, unposed quality is what gives the photo its authenticity. Her posture, the introspective expression, and the stillness of the moment struck me immediately.

'Later, when I showed the photo to others, several people remarked that it reminded them of an Edward Hopper painting: not only because of the light and colour palette, but also because of that quiet, solitary atmosphere so typical of his work. I didn't realise it at the time, while I was taking the picture, but now I can see how the moment carries a sense of stillness that invites reflection, as if there's an untold story within the frame.

'It was one of those rare moments when everything seemed to align: light, colour, composition, and emotion and I'm happy I had the chance to capture it.'

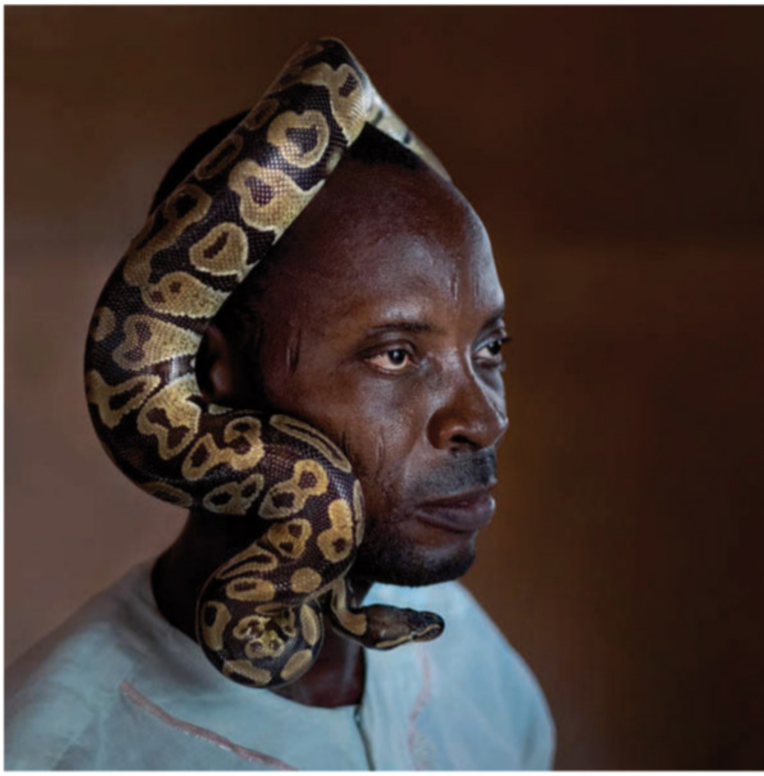
Erika Howard, UK

Fujifilm X-T2, 56mm, 1/125sec at f/1.2, ISO 1000

Erika was awarded tenth place in the People round last year. The judges said: 'The fact that the subject is looking out of the frame lends an element of mystery, and the shape created by the snake makes it almost like a headdress of sorts. Spend time with the image and you then start to take in the scars on the man's face and the subtle detail of his clothing.'

Erika says: 'My travels to the west African country of Benin coincided with the annual Voodoo festival, which is celebrated primarily in the city of Ouidah. In the voodoo religion, the python is considered one of the most powerful of deities, and a symbol of strength, fertility, and protection. Within the walls of the Temple of the Sacred Python dozens of snakes slither freely, watched over by a high priest, and revered by the local community.

'Although I initially took several photos from the doorway, looking directly at the priest, I was pleased that I was able to enter the temple, and find a place among the snakes to take my photos from a different perspective. I think that this less traditional angle of the man's head, the position of the python's head beneath his chin, together with the blankness of the terracotta wall behind, makes the moment feel more mysterious. There was just enough natural light coming through the open door to capture the priest's intense gaze and the details of his scarification, without having to increase my ISO to a noticeably noisy level.'



To enter this year's APOY and be in with the chance of winning a share of £26,000 worth of prizes, visit **www.amateurphotographer.com/apoy**

Reader Portfolio

Spotlight on readers' excellent images and how they captured them

Noah Crick, Liverpool

About Noah

Noah has been making a living from photography since 2022. You can see more of his work at www.njd.photos

How did you get into photography?

I started photography when I was 13 after seeing a friend's camera. I fell in love with it and have been taking photos ever since, but in 2022 I began to make it my profession and have loved every minute of it.

What do you love about photography?

I love how it frees your creativity to do whatever you can think of. I also enjoy trying to find new angles and different subjects in my photos than what you'd expect.

Favourite subjects

I love taking photos of landscapes and nature – I love going out into the world and trying to find new ways of photographing the scenery.

How and where do you find inspiration?

I find inspiration from others' work and by spending time in the outdoors.

Favourite photographers

Sam Binding, Peter McKinnon, James Popsys, Charbakerpix.

Favourite photography books

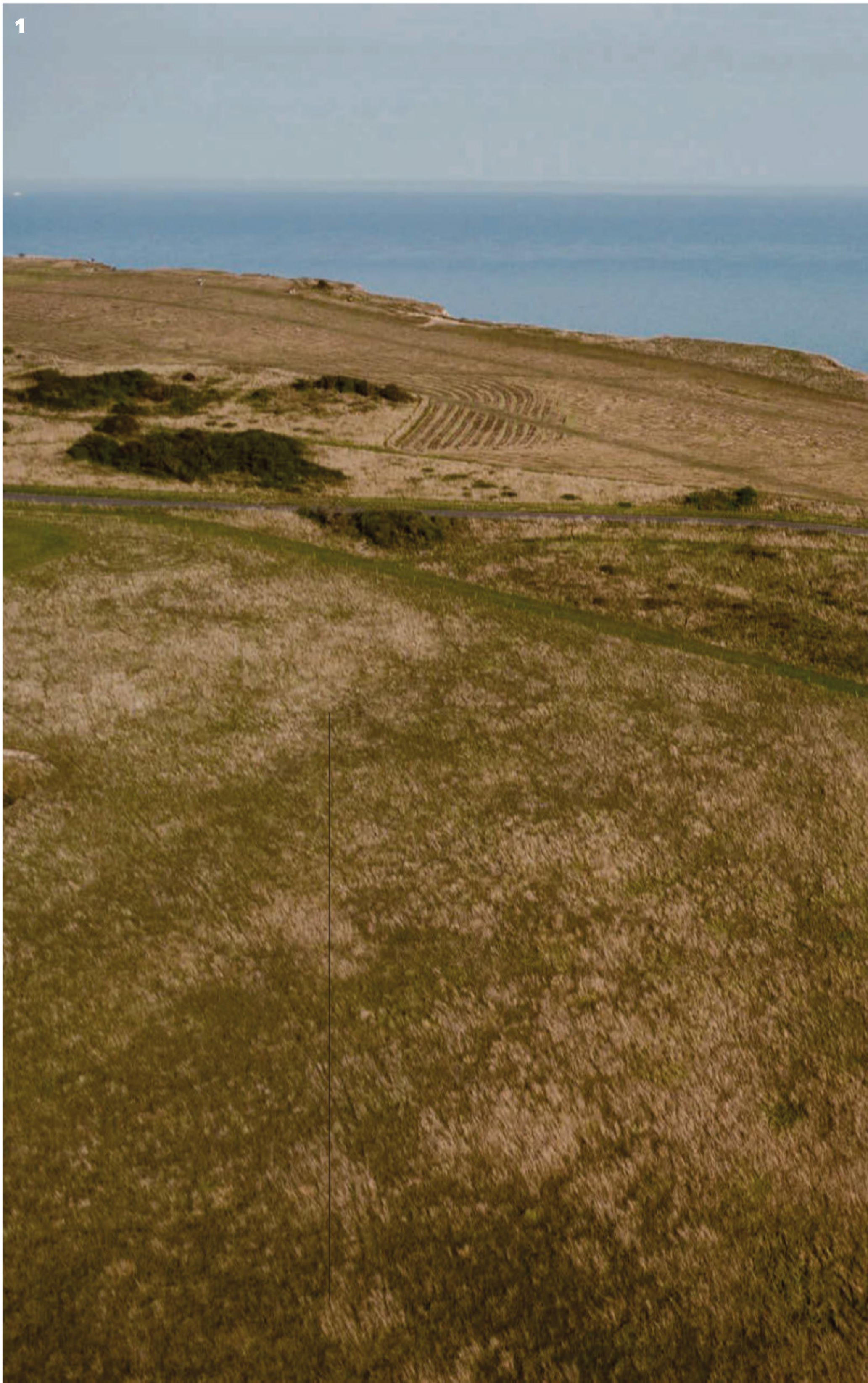
I love *Caravan* by Jonathan Meades.

What was your first camera?

A Canon EOS 350D.

Current kit

Panasonic Lumix S5, G9, GH3, GX7, Canon EOS 350D, DJI Mini 4K and DJI Mini 3.



Road to the Sea

1 I was flying my drone near the Eastbourne cliffs and spotted this winding road leading to the beach. I thought it made for a great photo of this summer's evening!

DJI Mini 4K, 1/100sec at f/2.8, ISO 100

NOTE: PRIZE APPLIES TO UK AND EU RESIDENTS ONLY

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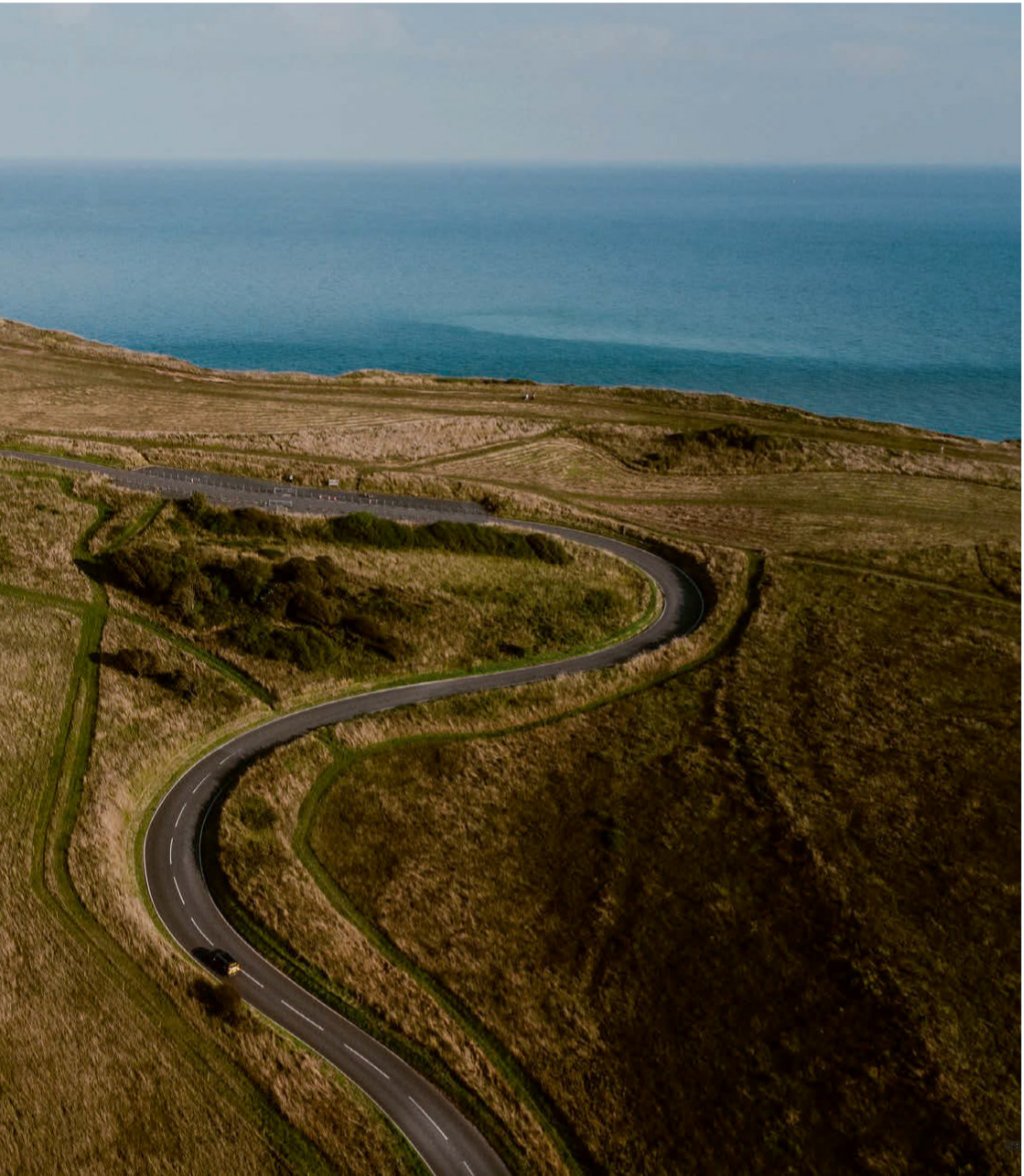
AWARD-WINNING WEBSITES

Reader Portfolio winners receive a one-year subscription to a **Gold Portfolio Series website** worth £300. UK domain name included.

Amazing Internet designs, builds and hosts amazing websites for creative people and companies. It has specialised in creating websites for photographers since 1999 and has services to suit all budgets. Whether you need a simple template-based site for £60 per year or a fully bespoke site, they've got you covered. www.amazinginternet.com

Submit your images
See page 3 for details of how to submit. You could see your photos here in a future issue! Please note: the prize is subject to change.



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Favourite lens
Panasonic Lumix 20-60mm.

Favourite accessory
CPL Filter.

Dream purchase
Panasonic Lumix S5 II & 70-200mm.

What software do you use for editing?
Adobe Lightroom Mobile.

Favourite tips
Start with whatever you have available to you; limitation breeds creativity. Just go out and take photos, learn by making mistakes and enjoy yourself.

About your pictures
I've only been flying my drone for about eight months and wanted to find a new way to photograph landscapes with it. I thought I'd give roads a try as a subject and loved it instantly!

3

Through the Dales

2 I took this photo in Yorkshire. I wanted to capture the beauty of the area surrounding the roads that takes you through it.

DJI Mini 4K, 1/40sec at f/2.8, ISO 100

Into the Clouds

3 This was a chance opportunity as we decided to take a side road we had never been down. It did not disappoint!

DJI Mini 4K, 1/800sec at f/2.8, ISO 100

Lefty or Right

4 As I was flying my drone I spotted this junction. I love the way it splits off in the frame to the left and right, leaving its destination a total mystery!

DJI Mini 4K, 1/80sec at f/2.8, ISO 100

A Tale of Two Sides

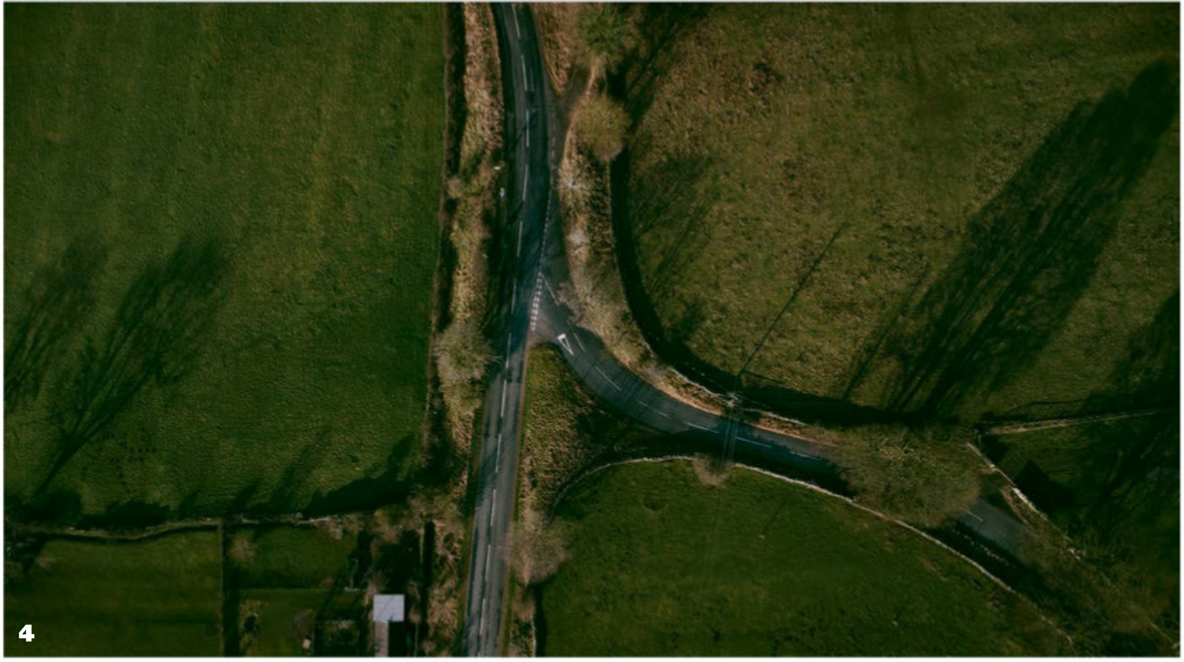
5 I really wanted to capture the contrast of these two fields split by a road through their centre. I liked the way it was dark on one side and bright on the other.

DJI Mini 4K, 1/120sec at f/2.8, ISO 100

Out of the Trees

6 I took this photo whilst camping. From my caravan I could see this path leading out of the trees; it made for a great leading line.

DJI Mini 4K, 1/1600sec at f/2.8, ISO 100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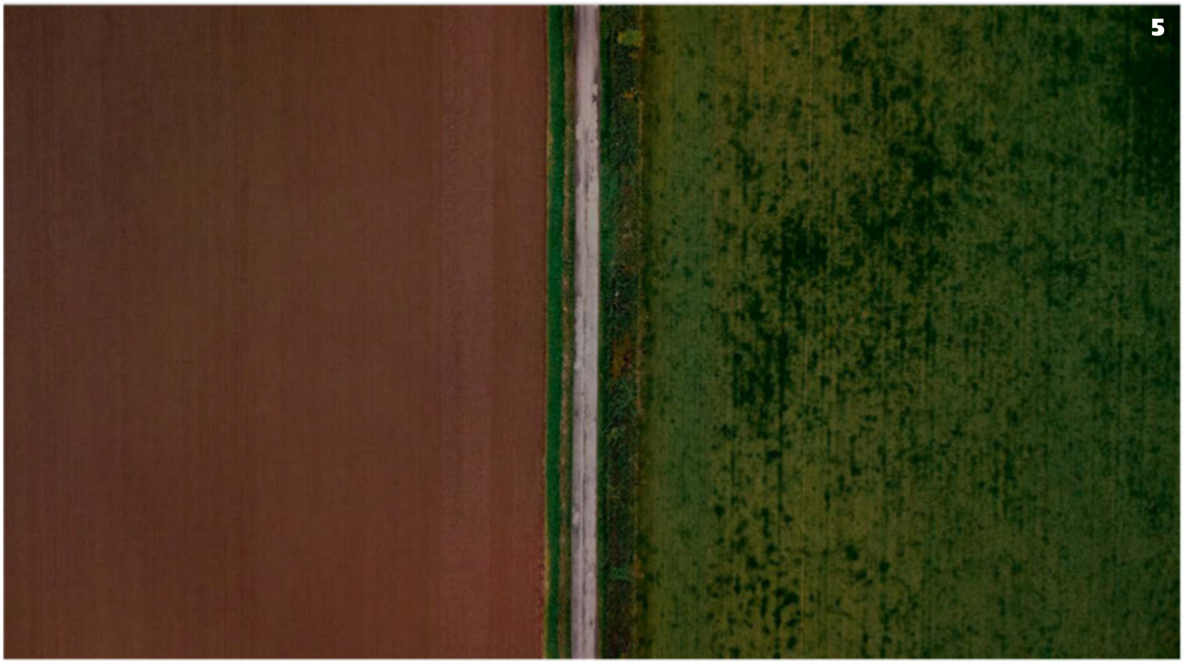
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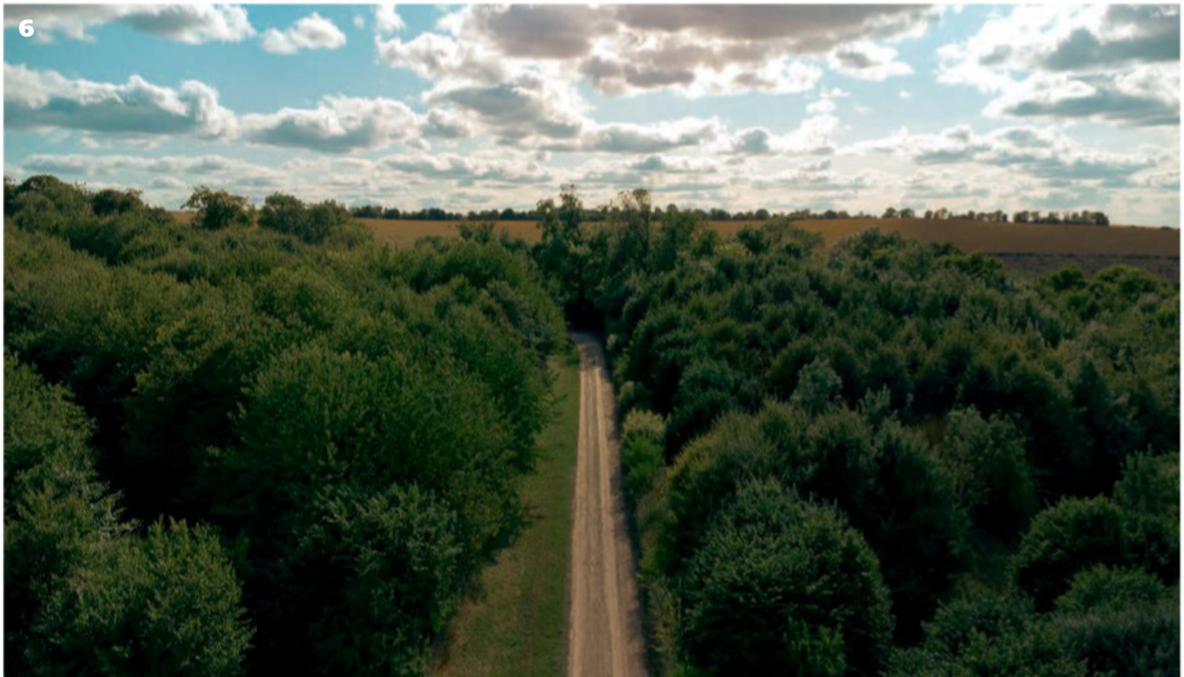
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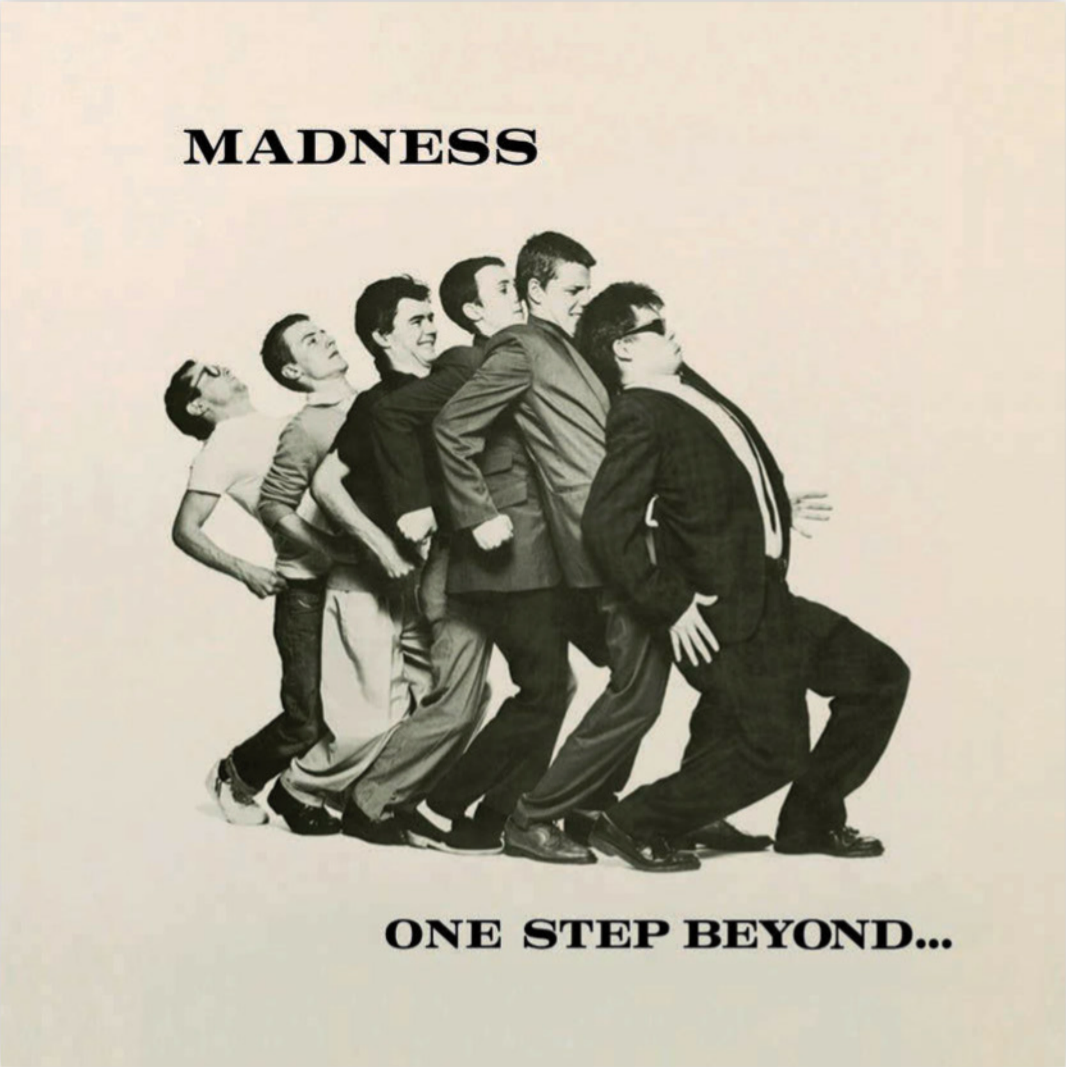


© CAMERON MCVEY/STIFF RECORDS

The cover of Madness's 1979 album *One Step Beyond*… mimics a pose on a 1975 rear album cover by Kilburn and the High Roads

FACT FILE

Madness's *One Step Beyond. . .*

Musicians: Graham McPherson (aka Suggs), Mike Barson (aka Monsieur Barso), Chris Foreman (aka Chrissy Boy), Mark Bedford (aka Bedders), Lee 'Kix' Thompson, Dan Woodgate (aka Woody) and Cathal Smyth (aka Chas Smash).

Released: 19 October 1979 (Stiff Records)

Best chart performance: No. 2 in the UK Albums Charts.

Sales: Over 300,000 certified UK sales

Fascinating fact: The album title derives from a song written by Jamaican ska singer Prince Buster. The Madness track features a spoken intro and an almost inaudible background chant of 'Here We Go'. The spoken lines added by Madness include 'Don't watch that, watch this' (taken from Prince Buster's song *Scorcher*) and 'This is a heavy, heavy monster sound' (lifted from *Monkey Spanner* by Jamaican vocal duo Dave and Ansell Collins)

One Step Beyond…

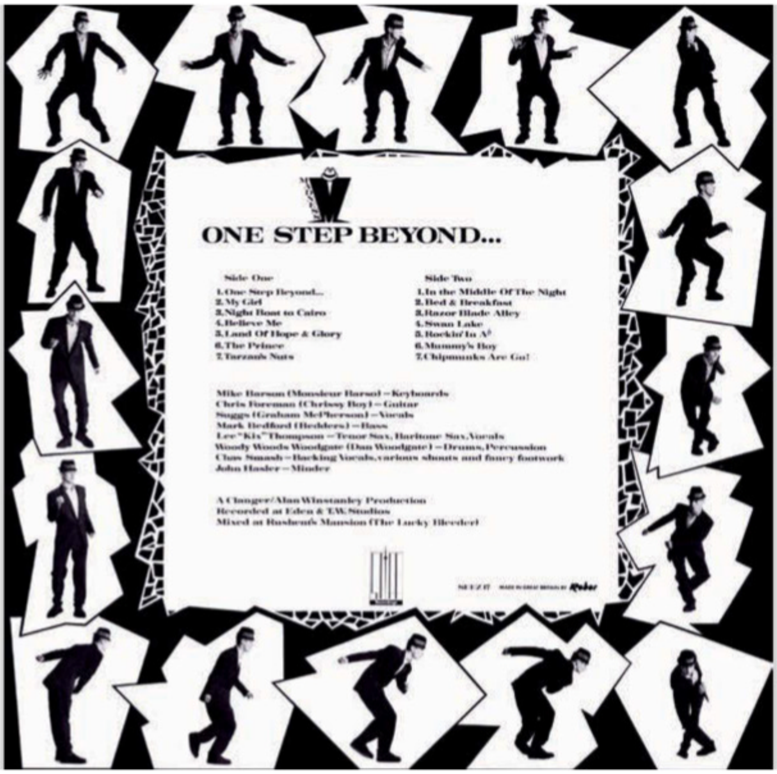
By Cameron McVey

Steve Fairclough has the inside story of the eye-catching group photo for the cover of the 1979 Madness LP, *One Step Beyond*...

It was the autumn of 1979 and a new musical movement was sweeping the UK – 2 Tone. It was an explosion of ska, rocksteady and reggae musical styles fused together by bands like The Specials, Madness, The Selecter and The Beat at the forefront of it. Almost overnight many of the bondage trousers of punks and jeans of rockers were being swapped out for drainpipes, pork pie hats, white socks and Harrington jackets by fans who lapped up the energy of the music from the 2 Tone bands.

At the centre of it all was Jerry Dammers, the keyboard player in The Specials, who founded the 2 Tone record label in 1979 with a vision to have the UK's equivalent of Motown. Dammers had the idea to combine reggae and punk and was very much about anti-racism and multi-culturalism – a fact mirrored in the multi-racial line-up of The Specials.

In a 2014 interview with *The Guardian*'s Dave Simpson, the Madness lead singer Suggs explained, 'When we met with record labels, they thought what we were doing was really odd. Things started to change when we saw The Specials



ONE STEP BEYOND...

Side One
1. One Step Beyond...
2. My Girl
3. Night Boat to Cairo
4. Believe Me
5. Land Of Hope & Glory
6. The Prince
7. Tarzan's Nuts

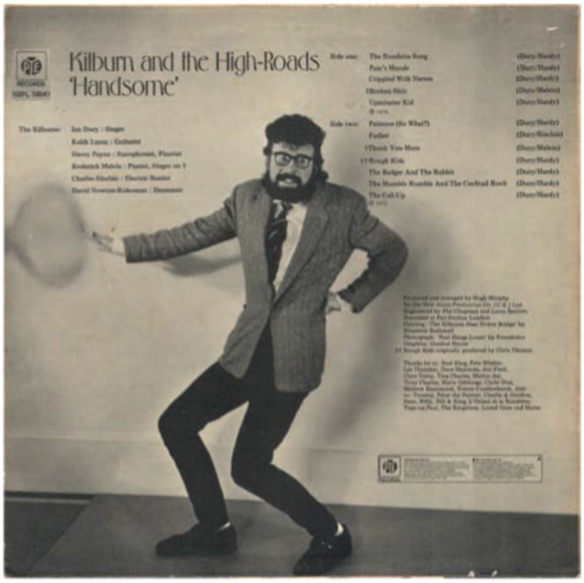
Side Two
1. In the Middle Of The Night
2. Bed & Breakfast
3. Razor Blade Alley
4. Swan Lake
5. Rockin' In A♭
6. Mummy's Boy
7. Chipmunks Are Go!

Mike Barson (Monsieur Barso) – Keyboards
Chris Foreman (Chrissy Boy) – Guitar
Suggs (Graham McPherson) – Vocals
Mark Bedford (Bedders) – Bass
Lee "Kix" Thompson – Tenor Sax, Baritone Sax, Vocals
Woody Woods Woodgate (Dan Woodgate) – Drums, Percussion
Chas Smash – Backing Vocals, various shouts and fancy footwork
John Hasler – Minder

A Clanger/Alan Winstanley Production
Recorded at Eden & T.W. Studios
Mixed at Rusheen's Mansion (The Lucky Bleeder)

© CHRIS GABRIN/STIFF RECORDS

The back cover of *One Step Beyond…* features 16 images shot by Chris Gabrin



Kilburn and the High-Roads
'Handsome'

© POUNDCAKE/PYE RECORDS

Madness based their iconic duck walk on an image of a roadie 'Paul Hangs Loose' on the back cover of the 1975 album *Handsome* by Kilburn and the High Roads

play live. They were like us, but turbo-charged. We were diesel at that time. After the gig, Jerry Dammers was talking about his new label, 2 Tone, which he said was going to be the new Motown. He told us he didn't have anywhere to stay, so he kipped at my mum's flat. We made [the single] *The Prince* for 2 Tone, not thinking we'd ever do another song after it. Then it got to No. 16 [in the singles charts] and suddenly record companies were excited about Madness.'

The founder of Stiff Records, Dave Robinson, kept trying to see Madness live, but the dates never worked out. His solution was to book Madness to play his wedding. Suggs recalled, 'I can still picture the shock on people's faces when we started our set. His wife kept asking us, "Don't you know any Hot Chocolate numbers?" When we noticed Elvis Costello was there, we jumped off the stage, grabbed him and got a big conga line going.'

Signing to Stiff

Despite Robinson's new wife's preference for Hot Chocolate's music, Madness signed to Stiff and set about recording the *One Step Beyond…* album. It was recorded in ten days with production by Clive Langer and Alan Winstanley. It was the first ever album produced jointly by Langer and Winstanley, who went on to produce more Madness albums and worked with artists such as Elvis Costello and the Attractions, Morrissey, Dexy's Midnight Runners and David Bowie.

Cameron McVey is an English singer, songwriter, record producer, former model and photographer. Born in 1957, he grew up in north London and started creating music in the early 1980s in the band Bim and later in the duo Morgan-McVey. His photography career included working for Vogue Studios and collaborating with Terence Donovan. He met and married the singer Neneh Cherry and became her producer and manager. His music production credits include the LPs *Blue Lines* by Massive Attack, *All Saints* by All Saints and *One Touch* by the Sugababes.

One Step Beyond… was released on Stiff Records in mid-October 1979 and reached a peak of No.2 in the UK Albums Charts. It initially remained in the album charts for over a year and, to this day, remains the group's biggest selling album. Suggs explained, 'I think it was my idea to do *One Step Beyond*, the track. It was one of the old Prince Buster records we used to play on the pub jukebox. Chas Smash, our trumpeter, came up with the intro, "Hey you, don't watch that, watch this. This is the heavy, heavy monster sound…". It was inspired by the shouty, slightly preposterous "I am the magnificent" intros you got on Jamaican records.'

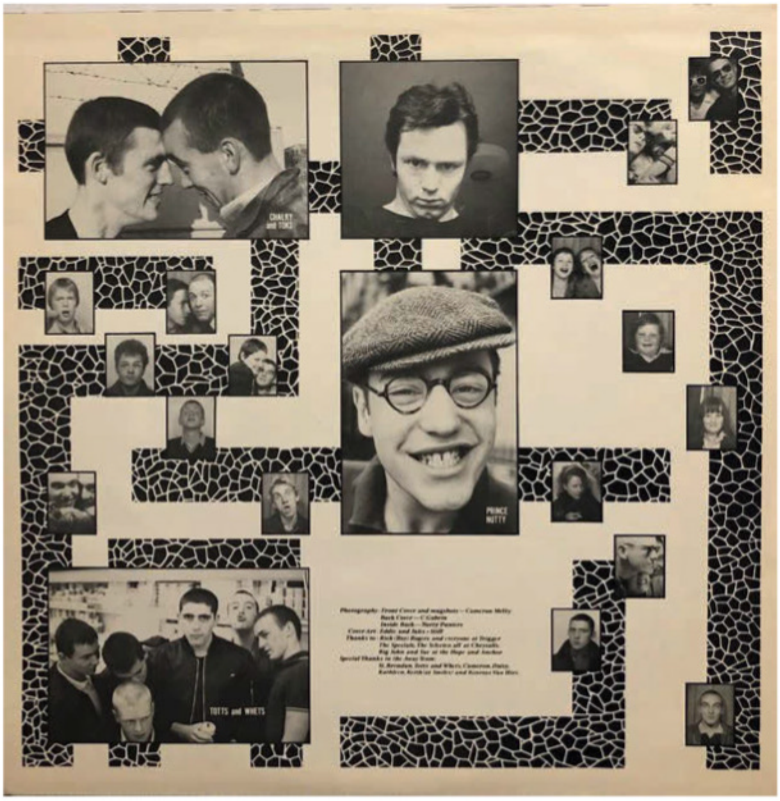
Madness were originally called the North London Invaders, but had to change the name because there was already another band with that monicker. The idea to rename themselves Madness came from guitarist Chris Foreman. The name Madness was also a neat fit with the *One Step Beyond…* track *(They Call It…) Madness*, which paid homage to a 1963 track by Prince Buster.

The duck walk

The classic 'Nutty Train' group photograph on the cover of *One Step Beyond…* is instantly recognisable, even over 45 years since it was taken. Shot by Cameron McVey, it is said to be inspired by a photograph of the roadie Paul Tonkin on the 1975 album *Handsome*, by Kilburn and the High Roads who had a lead singer and songwriter called Ian Dury.

Suggs told *The Guardian*, 'Because there were so many of us, it was hard to get us in the photograph for the album cover. We had to get really close together. Ian Dury's old band Kilburn and the High Roads did the duck walk on the back of their album. So, we did the same for a laugh – and it became iconic.'

The front cover was designed by 'Eddie and Jules + Stiff', using the photograph shot by Cameron McVey. Eddie and Jules were Eddie King and Julian Balme respectively. One factor that may not be obvious at first glance is that only six of the band are featured on the cover of *One Step Beyond…* This is because Cathal Smyth (aka



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Left: Part of the inner sleeve of *One Step Beyond…* featured pictures of 'Nutty Punters' and the photo credits for Cameron McVey and Chris Gabrin

Above: The inner sleeve of *One Step Beyond…* also included over 100 photo booth shots of Madness fans

Chas Smash) wasn't an official member of Madness at the time of the recording and the release of the album. Whilst McVey had shot the iconic image for the album's front cover, the rear album images were shot by Chris Gabrin.

The cover for the *One Step Beyond* single shows another photograph from the same shoot, with different poses and in colour. It is visibly different to the image used for the *One Step Beyond…* album cover as the single cover had the heads of some of the band seemingly much closer together. Like the follow-up single, *My Girl*, it used the Orator font for the typography.

Fashion photographer

In a 2021 interview, with Killa Kela's Kelavision channel on YouTube, Cameron McVey explained, 'I used to be a fashion photographer. I worked for *Vogue* and I did work for *Condé Nast*, assisted for Vogue Studios. I worked all over the world as an assistant, then became a photographer. Then I started doing cheap commercials, which were called "rostrum photography". Basically, you take a load of stills and then they film them with a camera, so people who can't afford to shoot a commercial then run them in the old days.'

McVey worked closely with the legendary, late British photographer and filmmaker Terence Donovan, who produced his commercials, and shot monthly video updates on the London music scene for MTV in the US, even before MTV Europe had launched.

McVey said, 'Terence Donovan, who was one of the "great three" from the sixties – [David] Bailey, Donovan and [Brian] Duffy – he was my producer, a really lovely man. So, Terence, God rest his soul, was my producer and he started off doing that and we directed commercials. Then the MTV people came along, via Miles Copeland, who was the brother of Stewart Copeland and manager of The Police. Basically, Miles [Copeland] was doing the reports from the London music scene.'

McVey had been thrown out of school for burning down a geography classroom and chucked out of college for dropping acid, so he turned to photography. He explained, 'I ended up wanting a job and I thought, "well, where am I going to meet the most girls? Photography." I went through the *Yellow Pages* and found a guy who gave me a job… and that's how it started. In those days, you used to be able to ring people up and say, "look, my name's Cameron. Do you mind if I come round and see if I can blag you for a job?" Twenty people would go "no", but one person might [say yes], and then you could go in there and you just sort of found your way in.'

He added, 'Back in those days you got taught to do things properly. In photography, you learnt all of the techniques. I worked at the darkroom that looked after *Condé Nast*, [Lord] Snowdon, and all those people. I learnt how to light

THE PANEL ON *ONE STEP BEYOND…*

Jill Furmanovsky

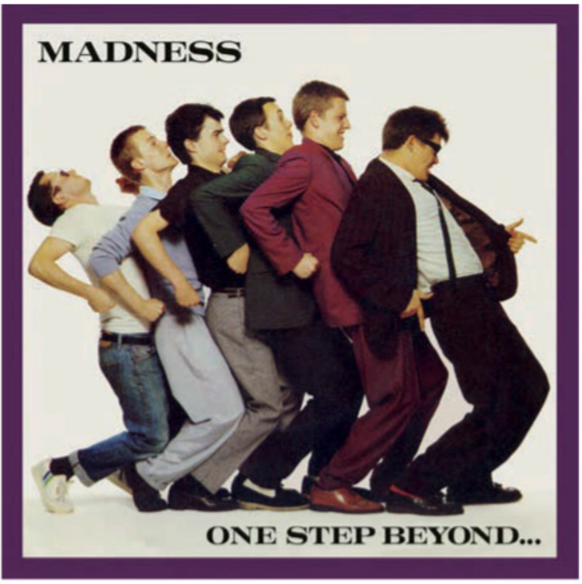
By the time McVey got Madness in the studio, on a white background, they'd perfected leaning into each other, often stepping on each other's shoes to create a unit of oneness. A feat of physical strength caught brilliantly; a great hybrid of British humour blended with punk irreverence for authority. Irresistible.

Lee Gale

This 'Nutty Train' image by Cameron McVey epitomises the mayhem and schoolyard antics of Madness. It's sensational. The coolest conga in history. Why I've never tried to recreate this on the many stag-dos I've attended, I will never know. Madness are performance artists.

Rankin

This cover, with Madness leaning and laughing, feels like an old friend. McVey captured their spirit perfectly, that raw, joyful chaos that is so them. *My Girl* was the first single I bought, and seeing them so full of life on that cover just brings it all back. They're more than a band; they're part of who I am.


MADNESS
ONE STEP BEYOND...

© CAMERON MCVEY/STIFF RECORDS

properly. When I started making music all of those things were applicable in music as well… all of those same theories. The whole thing of focus and speed and parallax theory… all of those things that apply in photography are actually the same with audio as well.'

Road manager

McVey didn't stay in the worlds of photography and filmmaking for too long as he went on to become a singer, songwriter and record producer for his wife Neneh Cherry, and produced albums for the bands Massive Attack, Portishead, All Saints and the Sugababes.

He told the Kelavision YouTube channel, 'I suppose I got a keen eye because I was always describing stuff to my blind mother. That's also where I learnt to tell stories and write lyrics, because my mum would listen to audio books all the time and I would be describing stuff to her. I figured early on to go and do the things that you want to do. Learn the process really fast. Get involved, do the research, study it, be the best you can be, even if it's a menial task like sweeping up – have it done, so no one's gonna tell you to do it [again].'

However, the fact that McVey shot the cover of *One Step Beyond…* was pretty much by accident. He recalled, 'Music was becoming more of a melting pot. Hence the funk behind Spandau Ballet, hence the reggae music and the ska behind Madness. It was all just a melting pot. I was chasing this and that and I ended up being Madness's road manager, and so did the [*One Step Beyond…*] picture by accident, just because I was following them around the country checking the music out. I was the road manager on the 2 Tone tour.'

The 2 Tone roots and sense of humour of Madness and the adroit photographic technical excellence of Cameron McVey had combined in a serendipitous way to give birth to an energetic image packed with fun. In just one frame it summed up the ethos of Madness and cemented the album cover as one of the most memorable of all-time.

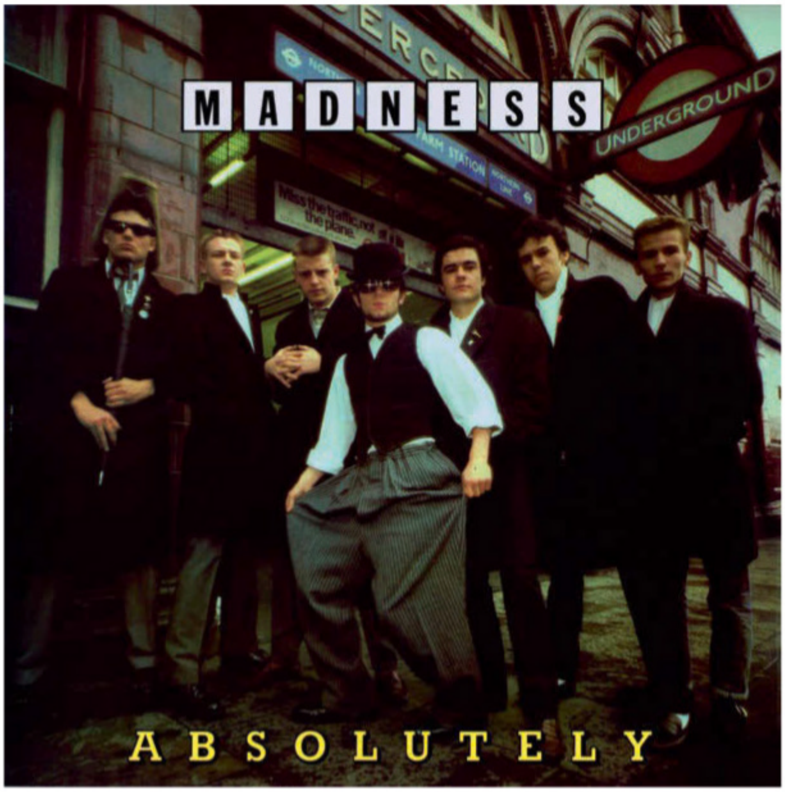
Above: The cover of the *One Step Beyond* EP featured a different colour image to the black & white one chosen for the album cover

Above right: The first ever Madness single, *The Prince*, came out on the Two Tone record label, which had its very distinctive black & white logo

Right: The second Madness album, *Absolutely* (1980), featured a more conventional colour photograph of the band on its front cover. This original version of it was later changed to a less sombre image

MADNESS
TT 3
2 TONE RECORDS
TWO-TONE RECORDS
A
CHS TT3
45 R.P.M.
Warner Bros Music Ltd (MCPS)
Marketed by Chrysalis Records Ltd
(C) 1979 (P) 1979 CHRYSALIS RECORDS LTD
MADE IN ENGLAND
THE PRINCE (2.32)
(Lee Thompson)
MADNESS
A Clanger Production
45

X © TWO TONE RECORDS


MADNESS
UNDERGROUND
ABSOLUTELY

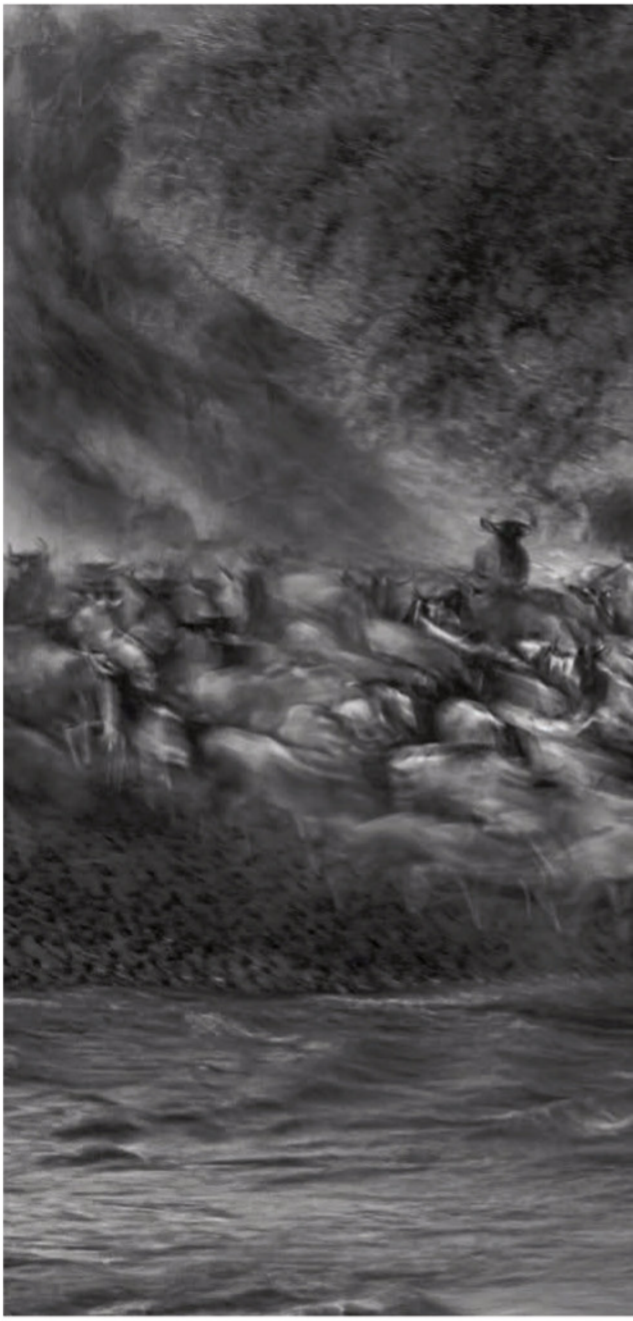
© STIFF RECORDS

Photo Insight

Cross to Bear

by Paul Goldstein

Paul Goldstein was the winner in the Black and White category at Nature Photographer of the Year 2024, for this image – a composition of control and chaos, writes **Peter Dench**



There are wildlife photographs that record, and there are those that reckon. British photographer Paul Goldstein's 'Cross to Bear', which took top honours in the Black and White category at Nature Photographer of the Year, 2024 does both. It captures the wildebeest migration, a spectacle of scale, instinct and peril but also speaks of struggle, sacrifice and the sublime.

Shot during the Great Migration in Africa, where over a million wildebeest move through the Serengeti and Maasai Mara, the photograph documents a critical, chaotic moment: the river crossing.

Goldstein says, 'I have watched the movement of wildebeest for many years, always fascinated by their herd mentality. The Great Migration is a journey of constant movement involving over a million ruminants; to think of it as just a series of river crossings misses the true scope. While guiding along the Talek River, a tributary of the Mara River, I observed a large herd gathering on the southern bank. I wasn't interested in simply capturing the scene with countless shots; I had envisioned this image for some time.'

The intense brightness posed a challenge. Goldstein uses intentional motion blur to stunning effect. He continues, 'I love using very slow shutter speeds; it reminds me of the anticipation of sending off film for processing. You can't be certain what you'll get, but you know the image will be unique, a critical advantage when capturing a widely documented event.'

The slower shutter speed renders the scene not as a frozen moment but as an extended experience, a painterly quality evoking Turner's tempestuous seascapes. The image resists easy reading, a monochrome maelstrom: hundreds of animals, their forms blurred and blending, descending into a river churned by hooves and panic. A thick plume of dust rises from the bank like smoke from a battlefield. There's no clarity or calm, only motion, confusion, and raw survival. Lingering on the photograph, the orchestration becomes apparent. This is a composition of control and chaos in equal measure.

Metaphor of endurance

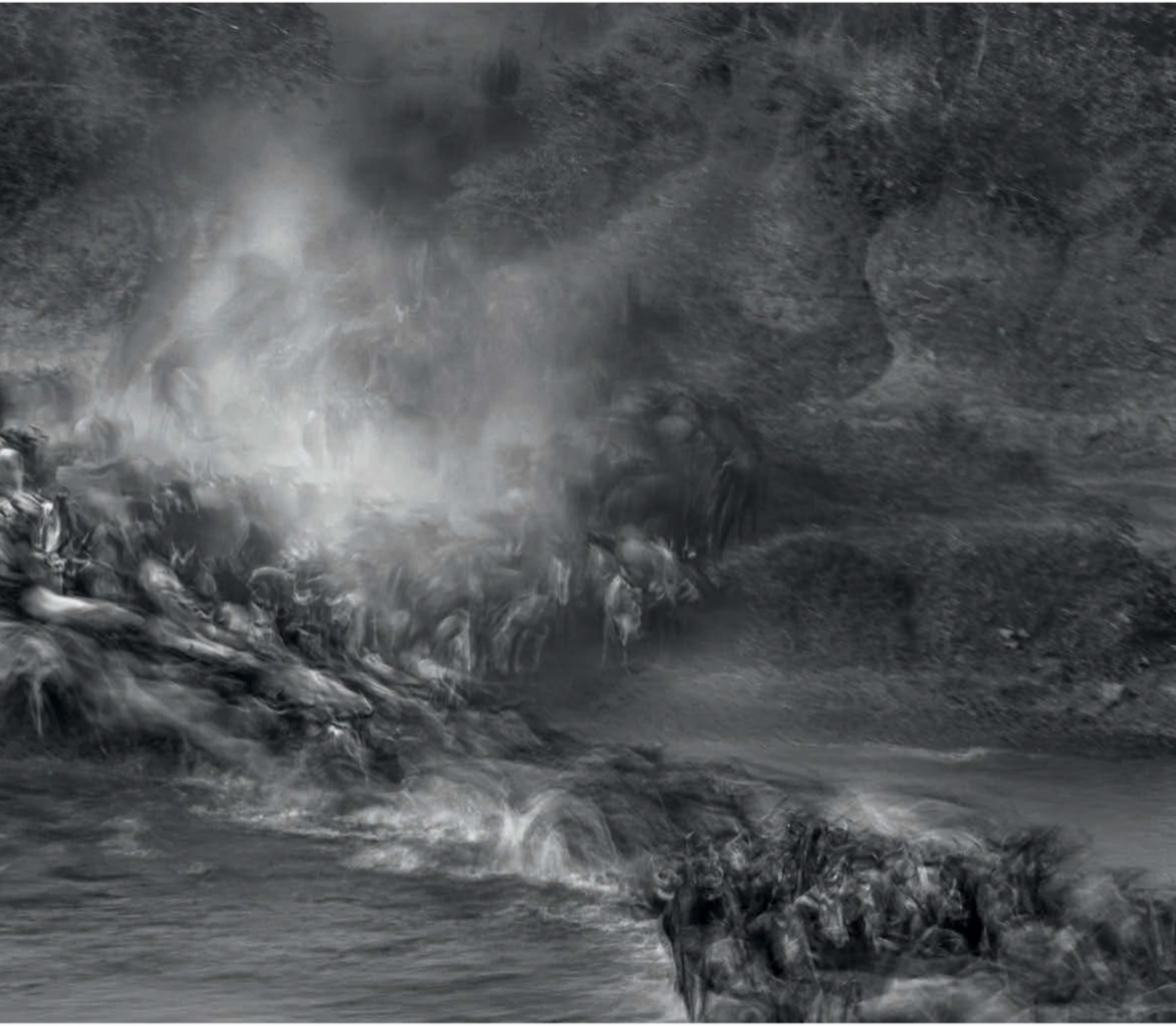
'Cross to Bear' invites us to read this scene not only as a river crossing, but a metaphor of endurance. The migration is both a necessity and an ordeal. It's hard not to see echoes of biblical or mythic trials in the title – Noah's flood, Exodus, the Stations of the Cross. The wildebeest press forward not because they want to, but because they must.

This layering of symbolism and action is a hallmark of Goldstein's work. A passionate conservationist and outspoken critic of safari commercialisation, he is known for images that carry both aesthetic force and ethical weight. 'If a photo doesn't provoke, what's the point?' he often says. 'I also realise that these in-camera effects don't appeal to everyone and may even leave some indifferent, but wouldn't it be boring if they did?' he adds.

Goldstein, who has watched the movement of wildebeest for many years, says, 'I had envisioned this image for some time'

'Cross to Bear' doesn't pander to the postcard expectations of wildlife photography. It's difficult, messy, and morally charged. The choice to shoot in black & white strips away the distraction of colour. One

© PAUL GOLDSTEIN / NATURE PHOTOGRAPHER OF THE YEAR 2024



animal that remained relatively still is an anchor in the tumult. What remains is shape, movement, and tension. The tonal range is dramatic, from the deep blacks of the river to the luminous mist that shrouds the scene. The image also subverts the traditional focal hierarchy, eschewing the usual focus on a central subject or predator.

Goldstein's timing, both technically and narratively, is razor-sharp. It takes experience to capture the migration, and it takes nerve to photograph it this way.

He notes, 'This image was not taken from a comfortable hide. It was taken on foot, with permission and protection, and with full respect for the animals' path.' As the wildebeest charged across, Goldstein wedged his Canon EOS-1D X with 70-200mm II firmly onto a beanbag and set it to a two-second delay. He used a polariser, which was essential, and added a converter, not for reach, but solely to reduce the light and allow for a shutter speed of 0.6 seconds at 165mm, f/45 ISO 50.

In a crowded field of wildlife imagery, where pinpoint-clarity and fast-action freezes can dominate, 'Cross to Bear' stands apart. It is deliberately difficult. It doesn't seek to impress, but to disturb, to challenge, to evoke. It reminds us that nature is not a theatre, but a crucible. Life is struggling to survive. The respect for nature is evident in the photograph's lack of intrusion. It feels like a witness statement rather than a trophy shot. The migration continues – another river to cross and cross to bear.

See www.paulgoldstein.co.uk

For more on Nature Photographer of the Year, visit **naturephotographeroftheyear.com**

A lifelong obsession

For wildlife photographer Federico Veronesi, tracking down 'tuskers' became all-encompassing. He tells **Graeme Green** about it

In 2019 Federico Veronesi heard about a striking 'great tusker' elephant that aerial patrols carried out by the Tsavo Trust NGO had spotted roaming in Tsavo East National Park. He says, 'In one of their reports, they showed a photograph, taken from the air, of a huge, amazing great tusker, with the tusks meeting at the tip, perfectly curved and symmetrical. The tusks were so impressive – very thick, very heavy, scraping the ground. I thought this elephant, named Balguda, was one of the most stunning tuskers I'd ever seen.'

Finding and photographing Balguda became Veronesi's mission. But it wasn't easy. 'Very few people have seen him at all, and from the ground even less,' he explains. 'I tried many, many times in many different areas, along rivers, around watering holes, trying to figure out where he spent time. But I never saw him. It became an obsession.'

Waiting

Around ten expeditions later, exploring in the wet season and dry season, he finally found the elephant in August 2023. 'I couldn't believe it,' he says. 'For a long time, I couldn't believe I'd actually seen him. It had taken me a long time to locate where the elephants were drinking in this area. It was a dry river bed – elephants dig holes in the ground where the water table's closer to the surface. I patrolled and spent time in a variety of them until, finally, I came across him. I was waiting, waiting, waiting... He emerged from the trees and came down from the riverbank into the riverbed towards a watering hole, to drink. It was an unbelievable feeling.'

Balguda is one of many elephants in Veronesi's new book *Walk The Earth*. Unlike his first two books, *Light And Dust* and *One Life*, which portrayed a wide range of African wildlife, *Walk The Earth* is dedicated to just one species. 'I love elephants for the way they connect to the African landscapes,' he explains. 'When I see elephants, I feel that they fill up the scene, they make it complete. They embody the spirit of wild Africa – the great tuskers, in particular.'

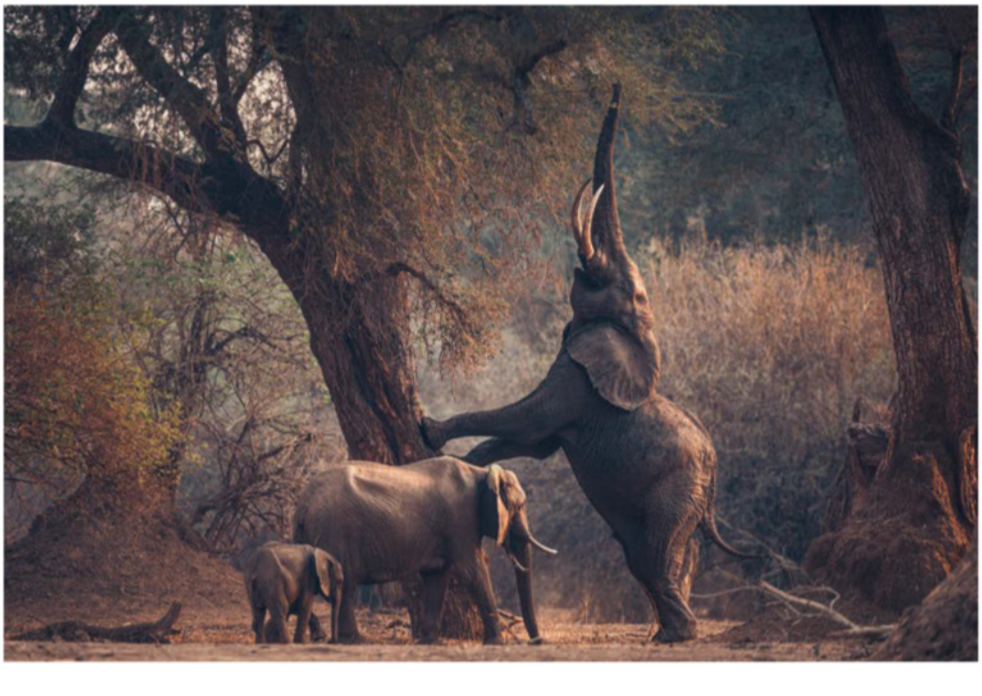
The book, and Veronesi's photography, is dominated by 'tuskers', also known as 'great tuskers' or 'big tuskers' – elephants with tusks that weigh 45kg (99lbs) or more. Tuskers can be both males and females, though males tend to be larger and to have bigger, heavier tusks than females. While tuskers are rare these days, it's believed they were far more common in the past, before human activity, especially ivory hunting, altered the genetic make-up of populations by taking so many large-tusked elephants out of the gene pool.

'When you see one of these giants, they're timeless,' says Veronesi. 'You feel a continuation between past, present and hopefully future. They have a very strong aura and charisma – all elephants, but particularly the big ones. The social relationships are unique – watching families of elephants and the way they care for one another. You perceive their intelligence, their empathy with one another. I also really love elephants in aesthetic terms – I like photographing them in many different ways.'

Veronesi's seen no shortage of elephants over the past half century. Born in 1975 in Milan, Italy, into a family of photography and natural history enthusiasts, he first went on safari in Kenya's national parks (Samburu, Amboseli, Masai Mara…) aged six, carrying a small Polaroid camera. 'One of my most striking memories is of our first day in the wild, in Meru National Park, coming to the lodge overlooking the beautiful Mulika Swamp,' he tells me. 'In July 1982 the

Far left: African elephant Craig, dust-bathing. Kimana Sanctuary, Kenya. February 2023

Below: African elephant reaching up for a branch of Albida faidherbia tree. Mana Pools National Park, Zimbabwe. October 2023



ALL IMAGES © FEDERICO VERONESI

swamp was covered with elephants – so many. There must have been hundreds there. As a child with a love of elephants, seeing so many in one place was overwhelming.'

In 2002, after studying Economics at Bocconi University in Milan, he moved to Kenya, working for a Nairobi-based development NGO called Terra Nuova (New Earth). He set up a small, semi-permanent tent on the banks of the Talek River in the Masai Mara National Reserve, which he used on weekends and holidays to explore and to photograph wildlife. But eventually he decided to go all in.

'I realised I wanted to spend more time with the animals and to keep telling the stories, the same animal year after year. I was inspired by the work of Jonathan Scott and Anup Shah, great photographers who spent a lot of time in the Mara and had amazing portfolios of animals through the years. I wanted to try to make something of the sort myself.'

In 2009 he had an unexpected encounter with a caracal in the Masai Mara, an elusive cat 'like a mirage or ghost animal', going on to follow and photograph the mother and her cubs for three years.

Charismatic

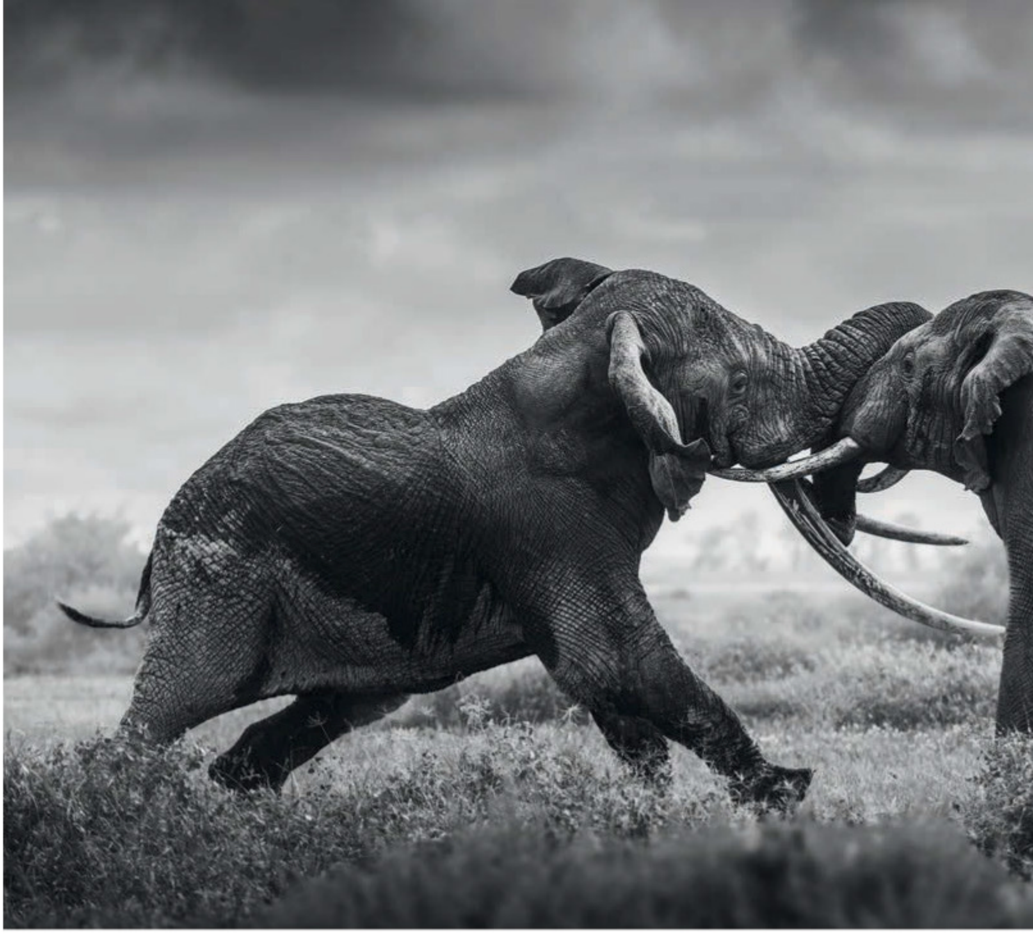
Another defining photographic encounter came in Amboseli National Park in 2010, this time with a big tusker, known as Tim. 'Kenya was emerging from a big heavy drought,' Veronesi says. 'A lot of elephants died. At the end of 2009, the rains returned, so in 2010 everything was green and there was an explosion of social interactions between the elephants. It was great to be there, with fighting bulls and mating all over the place. In all this, out of the woodlands one morning, I saw this gigantic elephant with enormous tusks – it was Tim.

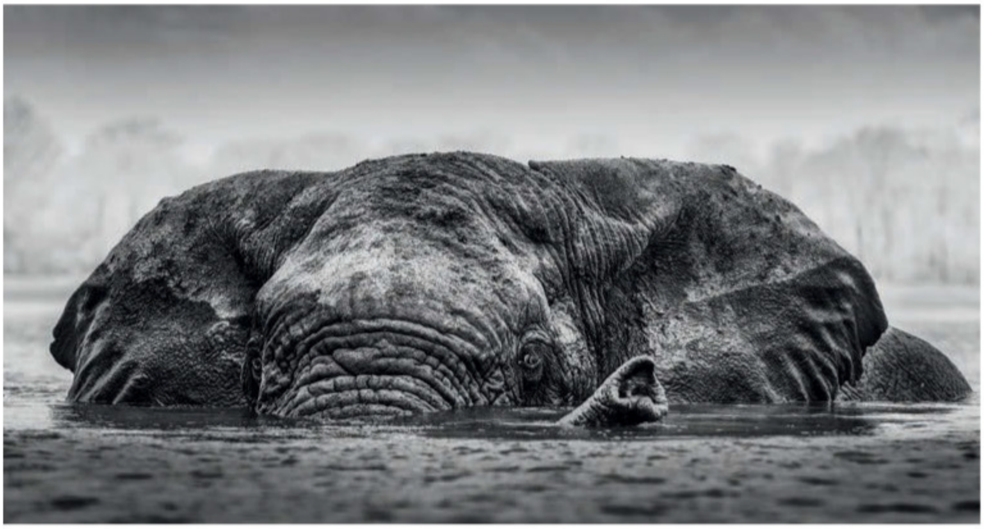
'He was the most charismatic elephant I'd ever seen. You could see how he was revered by the other bull elephants and given space whenever he was walking. He was in musth, the high testosterone condition. He was sought after by the females – with Tim, they would stay close to him, but with other males, they'd run and challenge them or give them a much harder time to allow them to mate. This experience was a strong moment, and the beginning of my journey to find Kenya's tuskers: Tolstoy, Craig… I started spending more time in Amboseli with the big elephants.'

Still based in Nairobi ('It was a dream and it worked out,'), Veronesi makes his living leading photographic safaris, primarily in Kenya, Tanzania and Zimbabwe, as well as coaching and mentoring photographers, and selling prints and books. *Walk The Earth* contains photos taken across the years in Kenya, Zimbabwe, Malawi, Tanzania and Namibia, ranging from close-up portraits to brawling bulls to herds wandering crossing epic landscapes.

Dedicating a book to just one species gave the opportunity to push his creativity. 'It's extremely interesting but at the same time it's a challenge. I had the idea of showing many different individual elephants but I also wanted it not to be repetitive in terms of photography, so it doesn't become boring.'

The images move between colour and black & white. 'My rule is that if the colours don't add anything to the emotion, the message or the feeling of the image, I leave them out,' he tells me. 'In many images





Top: African elephant X004 fighting against another bull

Above: African elephant bathing in Shire river

Opposite page, top: Tim, African elephant

Opposite, middle: Oneton and two other African elephants drinking at a waterhole

with elephants, black & white works great – you can bring out textures. There are times when colour adds a special element, especially the warm afternoon or early morning light; if it's bookended with dark tones, that warm light can add a strong sense of Africa to the images. But otherwise, I'll take the colours out.'

He particularly enjoys working with back-lighting and side-lighting. 'I find standard front-lighting with any subject extremely boring, extremely descriptive and too revealing,' he explains. 'Whereas back-lighting and side-lighting, when used carefully and balanced with the background, it reveals just a hint of the subject and adds a layer of mystery or emotion. I like to look for those tiny areas where light and dark meet, especially when there's dust or in environmental images, like elephants coming out of the bushes slightly lit up by the fading sun. These kinds of images reveal just a little bit and leave something to the emotion and the imagination of the viewer.'

Though he does process his work on the computer, he's firm in his belief that nature photos should be authentic. 'I see photography as a medium that's intended to present a small portion of reality. As a viewer, when I look at a

3 TIPS FOR PHOTOGRAPHING WILDLIFE FROM FEDERICO VERONESI

1 Depth

While it's tempting to travel the world in search of all the most charismatic species, I believe going deeper into fewer subjects or one subject, or a specific location, might help your photography develop its fullest potential. You can see your subjects in different light conditions and habitats, and witness different behaviours, and you can be more creative by not being focused on capturing shots of species that you're seeing for the first time.

2 Mystery

If you want your photography to have impact, I'd suggest moving on from standard descriptive images of wildlife. Look for images with a strong emotional impact, often conveyed by dramatic lighting, or by hiding more than you reveal, or exploring the relationship between your subject and its habitat. Move your position around your subject to try different compositions. Focus on locations that offer stunning, dramatic backdrops to your subject. Seek different perspectives to frame your subject, be it lower, higher, or from behind blurred leaves.

3 Processing as a creative tool

Post-processing is an essential step to fully realizing your photography. It can be a powerful tool to define a uniform style of presentation of your imagery. Bad processing can completely ruin fantastic photographs. Invest time and effort in refining your skills. Both in black & white and colour photography, your choice of tones and the relation between the tonalities of the elements of your scene will convey different messages and feelings to the image. Also, your choice of colour palette will help make your images to stand out.

photograph, I assume that scene is actually a piece of the reality. If something is removed or added, then it's not any more. You could argue that removing a small twig wouldn't change much, but I try to set a dividing line and don't remove anything. If I have distracting twigs or the like, instead of removing them I try to make them the same tonality as the background, so they're still there but don't catch the viewer's attention in the same way. I try to balance tones in the image, so only the fundamental elements come out, but still being truthful to the scene.'

How long elephants will continue to walk the Earth remains a critical question. The ivory trade, poaching, habitat loss, human-wildlife conflict and trophy hunting has decimated numbers across Africa during the past few centuries. Veronesi sees positive steps being made on ivory. 'China and other Asian countries have done a lot on reducing ivory trade and demand,' he suggests. His greatest concern currently is human-wildlife conflict, as humans and animals come into ever-closer proximity. 'Elephants need space, and they're quite destructive when they're hungry, especially here in Kenya.'

Shocked

He's also been shocked by the killing of elephants for trophy hunting, especially the recent deaths of several big tuskers from the Amboseli area who cross between Kenya, where they're protected, and Tanzania, where trophy hunting's allowed. 'To me, trophy hunting is absolutely unacceptable, even though some people might say it might have an impact to conserve wild spaces,' he argues. 'The reality, as we've seen in Amboseli, is they've killed five big bulls in full reproductive age. It has a very strong negative impact. These trophy hunters always target the biggest, strongest elephants, the ones that have more potential to become the supporters of the species, through breeding – if you take out the strongest ones, the species becomes impoverished and weakened. You also lose the transmission of knowledge and wisdom. I'm totally against it.'

Above: African elephant herd walking to water. Amboseli National Park, Kenya. November 2021

Below: African elephant Balguda walking in dry river bed. Tsavo East National Park, Kenya. August 2023

Veronesi has put his work to good use, collaborating with or using his images to help raise awareness and funds for organisations, such as the African Wildlife Foundation, David Sheldrick Wildlife Trust, Cheetah Conservation Fund and the Remembering Wildlife books. He believes photography is a useful tool to help conservation efforts. 'It moves people close to the animals,' he says. 'It shows people the animals as individuals. It shows their emotions. It connects people. In 2013, at the peak of the ivory poaching crisis, I did a trip to China and I spoke at schools, universities and banks about the plight of elephants and how the ivory trade was impacting the population.

'I showed photos of the elephants' social interactions, the babies playing, the families, and people were extremely moved by that. It was on a small-scale but I could see the impact of photography in real life.'

Walk The Earth by Federico Veronesi is available directly from Veronesi's website for $60 (£45): **federicoveronesi.com**. It will also be published and available more widely by Prestel (**prestelpublishing.penguinrandomhouse.de**) from September 2025, also for £45. Federico is on Instagram **@federico_veronesi**

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28mm f2.8 M Rokkor -Minolta	E+	£399
28mm F2.8 ZM - Zeiss	Mint-	£579
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35mm F1.4 Asph M	E+	£1,989
35mm F1.4 Asph M 6bit (11663)	E++	£2,799
35mm F1.4 Asph M (11675)	Mint-	£2,999
35mm F1.4 Classic Summilux M	Mint-	£2,749
35mm F1.7 VM Asph -Voigtlander	Mint-	£499

35mm F2 Asph M (11673)	E++	£1,799
35mm F2 Asph M (11879)	E++	£1,649
35mm F2 ZM - Zeiss	E++	£699
35mm F2.8 C Biogon ZM - Zeiss	E+	£449
40mm F1.4 VM Nokton MC	E++	£379
40mm F2 C Summicron	E+	£399
50mm F1.0 M	E+	£4,399
50mm F1.0 VM Nokton Voigtlander	E++	£1,249
50mm F1.2 Asph Noctilux M	Mint	£4,499
50mm F1.4 Asph 6bit - 11891	E+	£1,949
50mm F1.4 Asph 6 BIT (11892)	E+	£2,149
50mm F1.4	E+	£1,749
50mm F1.5 ZM -Zeiss	E+	£529
50mm F2 M (III)		£599
50mm F2 M (V)	E+	£1,549
50mm F2 M 6bit - 11826	E+	£1,199
50mm F2.4 M (11680)	E+	£1,189
75mm F1.25 - Leica M	E++	£229
75mm F1.5 VM Asph Nokton - Voigtlander	E++	£599
75mm F2 Apo M 6bit	E+	£1,789
75mm F2.4 M 6bit + Hood	E+	£649
75mm F2.5 M 6bit	E++	£899
90mm F2 Apo M	Exc	£1,249
90mm F2 M	E+	£449
90mm F2.4 M 6bit + Hood	E++	£799
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180mm F3.4 Apo R 3cam	E++	£549
180mm F3.4 Apo ROM	E+	£699
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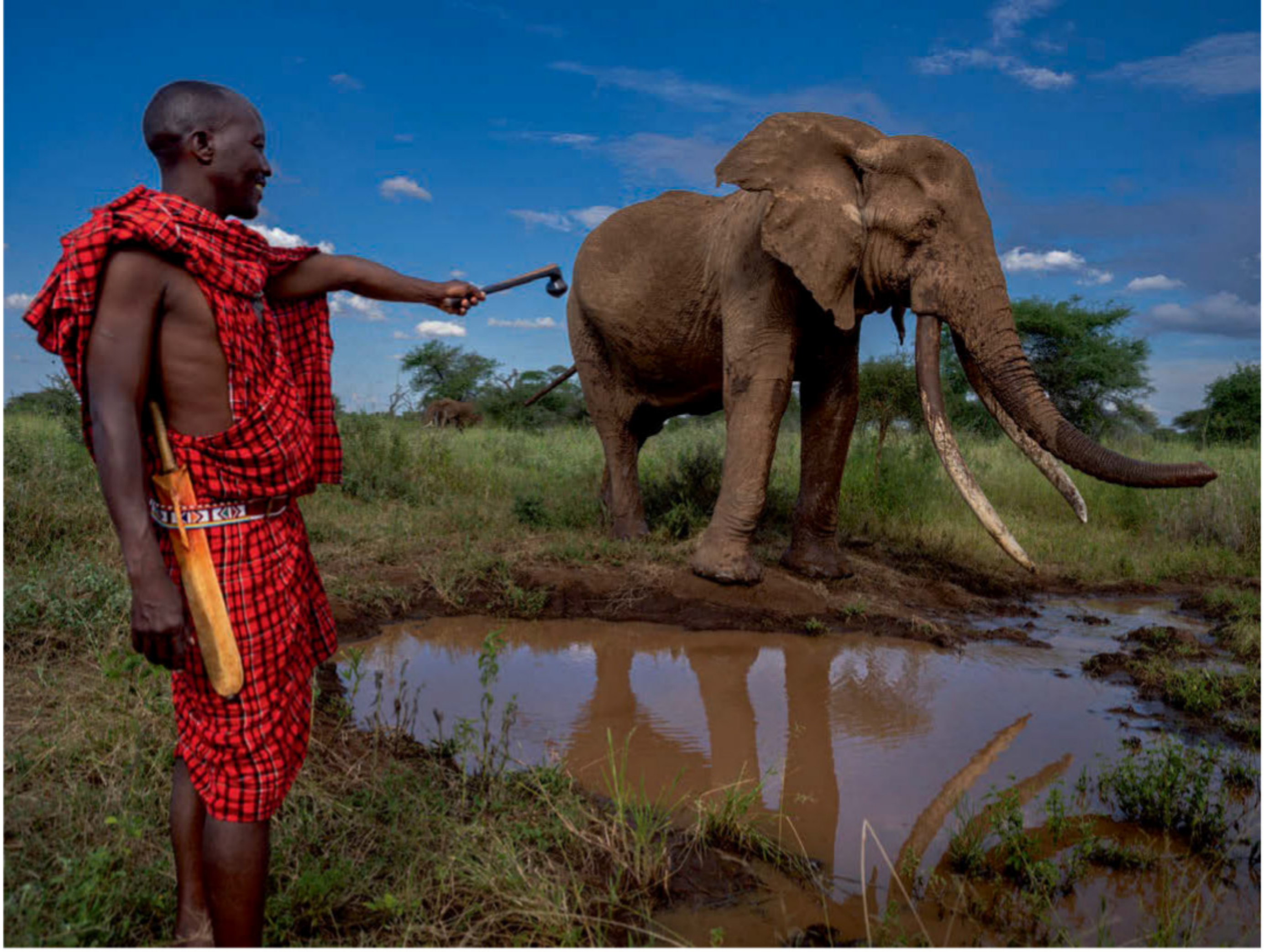


ALL PICTURES © BRENT STIRTON, SOUTH AFRICA, SHORTLIST, PROFESSIONAL COMPETITION, WILDLIFE & NATURE, 2025 SONY WORLD PHOTOGRAPHY AWARDS

A fragmented land

Brent Stirton's Amboseli Under Threat project sheds light on the challenges facing Kenya's Amboseli ecosystem, particularly the impact of changing land ownership and usage rights among the Maasai community. Peter Dench finds out more...

Above: Craig, an iconic tusker of Amboseli on Kitende Conservancy, a local Maasai-run conservancy

The Maasai Group Ranch system in Amboseli, which once governed land rights and communal usage, has evolved. For the first time in the modern era, individual Maasai members have the legal right to sell their land parcels. This shift has fragmented a previously cohesive landmass that supported both traditional pastoralism and wildlife conservation. Some Maasai have opted to sell to outside investors, leading to the rise of factories, fences, urban sprawl, and water-intensive agricultural developments – many of which encroach on former elephant habitats.

'I'm working on a very large essay on planetary health right now – the relationship between humans, animals and environments – and an important aspect of that is community conservation,' explains South African-born photographer Brent Stirton, speaking from California, where he currently resides.

Stirton is known for immersing himself deeply in the stories he covers, often spending extended periods in the field to grasp the full complexity of the issues. Amboseli Under Threat resonated with him as it encapsulates many of the core challenges facing community-based conservation today.

He spent around two weeks working with Big Life Foundation, a nonprofit conservation organisation operating in the Amboseli-Tsavo-Kilimanjaro ecosystem of East Africa. Founded in 2010 by photographer Nick Brandt, conservationist Richard Bonham, and entrepreneur Tom Hill, Big Life adopts a holistic, community-driven approach to conservation.

Its initiatives include anti-poaching patrols, protection of key species (notably elephants and the endangered Eastern black rhino), predator compensation programmes to reduce human-wildlife conflict, and community development efforts such as education and job creation for local Maasai.

Stirton's photographs document Big Life's work across the region, including the construction and maintenance of elephant deterrent fences, compensation schemes for farmers affected by wildlife, and educational outreach to Maasai communities.

In one haunting image, zebras lie dead within a newly fenced plot – land that was once part of the communal Maasai system but has since been sold. The new owner erected a fence without regard for wildlife migration routes or access to water. Tragically, the animals died of thirst before Big Life was able to intervene and cut the fence to release them.

Another striking photograph features Craig, one of Amboseli's iconic tuskers – bull elephants with extraordinarily large tusks – on the Kitende Conservancy. This land is managed by local Maasai who have chosen to maintain traditional lifestyles while engaging in conservation through leasing schemes with Big Life. Tuskers such as Craig are immensely valuable, generating millions in tourism revenue annually. Yet once they cross into neighbouring Tanzania, they risk extermination by unethical hunters – three iconic Kenyan tuskers have recently been killed this way.

Preserving Amboseli as a haven for wildlife has become increasingly complex but no less urgent. Stirton reflects on the challenges: 'With these tuskers, it's complete gratitude as to whether you see them or not. It's also costing a significant amount of money every day – you need a 4x4 vehicle, a driver, permits, and a network to keep track of sightings. It's a bit of a gamble.'

Known for combining aesthetic sophistication with journalistic integrity, Stirton seeks to evoke emotional responses while maintaining ethical storytelling. 'I'm a formalist, so I'm always looking to compose things in a particular way. That's just who I am. A lot of it comes down to how much time we have and what the situation offers. A story like this is often quiet – there's not necessarily going to be a lot of sensation. So using lighting, using formal compositions – it's part of trying to extract the most from a situation that might not offer you much.'

This is exemplified in a powerful image of a father and son in the landscape, their cattle and goats behind them. The aesthetic subtly reinforces a larger message: that the future of conservation hinges on whether the younger generation will choose to continue a pastoral lifestyle in harmony with wildlife.

Through Amboseli Under Threat, Stirton doesn't just capture the environmental crisis – he lays bare its cultural and social dimensions too, reminding us how deeply interwoven human and ecological systems truly are.

Above: Big Life's ranger training academy

Below: Njoroke ole Mpere, vice chairman, Nairrabala Conservancy, believes in benefits gained from protecting their land for wildlife and for his children's future

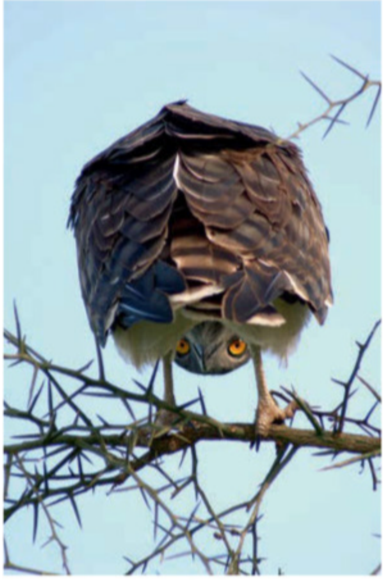
This project was shortlisted in the Professional competition, Wildlife and Nature category at the 2025 Sony World Photography Awards. For more information on the SWPA, visit **worldphoto.org**

Laughter and conservation

Jade Burrell celebrates the tenth anniversary of the Nikon Comedy Wildlife Awards, highlighting its impact

This year, the Nikon Comedy Wildlife Awards celebrates its tenth anniversary – a milestone marked not just by a decade of laugh-out-loud animal photos but also by a growing global community connecting conservation, creativity, and humour.

It all started in 2015 when Paul Joynson-Hicks photographed a brown snake eagle in Tanzania, capturing the bird peering at him upside down through its legs. The funny moment sparked an idea: a competition dedicated to humorous wildlife imagery, a niche with no real home for photographers. After a call with Tom Sullam, who became co-founder, the idea evolved – humour could be a powerful tool for promoting conservation.



© PAUL JOYNSON-HICKS

'Pictures of dead, slaughtered elephants and rhinos are vital,' Paul says. 'But I wanted something alongside that – something uplifting that could connect people emotionally to conservation.' If wild animals often display comedic, human-like behaviour, why not create a platform to celebrate it? The lighthearted idea soon became the beloved Comedy Wildlife Photography Awards (now Nikon Comedy Wildlife Awards), inspiring photographers worldwide.

Worldwide phenomenon

In its inaugural year, the competition was fortunate to have broadcaster and wildlife expert Kate Humble join as a judge. Her connections featured the winning images on The Telegraph Online, bringing significant attention to the awards right from the start.

Kate, who has remained a judge since the inaugural competition, says it has become a worldwide phenomenon without losing sight of its original purpose. 'Every year, the number and standard of entries from all over the world increases, as does the press coverage of the competition,' she comments.

Paul Joynson-Hicks agrees with Kate's sentiment. 'The idea from the very beginning was to combine humour with conservation,' he affirms. 'Humour is an incredibly powerful tool. It's not just about laughing at an animal's funny face; it's about building a connection, a shared experience that draws us closer to the natural world and makes us care about it.'

Above: Stuck Squirrel by Milko Marchetti, 2024 Winner

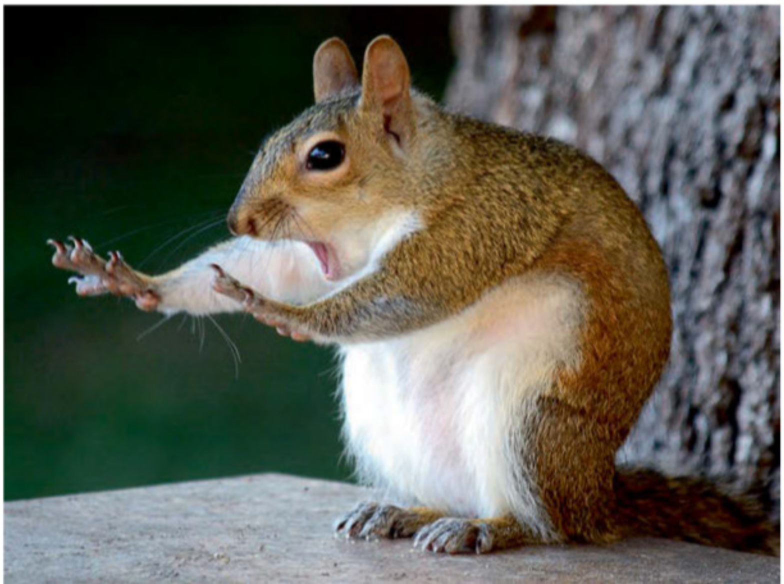
Left: The image that started it all, by Paul Joynson-Hicks

With more than 9,000 entries last year, the competition has become a key player in the wildlife photography world.

From curious cubs to playful turtles, the images showcase the humorous side of the natural world while sparking smiles and conversations about wildlife. 'I had been photographing a pride of lions I've followed for many years,' shares Sarah Skinner, whose photo of a lion cub bounding toward the pride male – seemingly grabbing his nether regions – won the 2019 Comedy Wildlife Award. 'When I saw the image, I couldn't stop laughing. It

© MILKO MARCHETTI / NIKON COMEDY WILDLIFE AWARDS

Right: Caught in the Act by Mary McGowan, 2018 Winner



© MARY MCGOWAN / COMEDY WILDLIFE PHOTOGRAPHY AWARDS

was one of those moments that I knew would make others laugh too, so I decided to share it with the competition.'

For many photographers, it has served as a platform to showcase their talent and passion for wildlife – and for some, it has even been a stepping stone toward a career in wildlife photography.

Humour, wildlife, and global connection

The Comedy Wildlife Awards has gone from a small UK event to a global hit, thanks to its universal sense of humour. Wildlife photography might sometimes

Talk To The Fin by Jennifer Hadley, 2022 People's Choice winner

© JENNIFER HADLEY / NIKON COMEDY WILDLIFE AWARDS

feel niche, but a monkey pulling a funny face or a squirrel caught in an awkward moment can make anyone, anywhere, smile.

Nikon, the competition's title sponsor, has seen the buzz firsthand. Julian Harvie, the marketing director of Nikon Northern Europe, comments, 'It's a real privilege to be the title sponsor for the Nikon Comedy Wildlife Awards. The global interest is quite staggering, and it's an honour to be part of a team that takes being funny so seriously.'

Nikon's backing has helped the competition grow while spreading an important conservation message – something that fits nicely with the brand's love of photography and the environment. Co-founder Tom Sullam sums it up: 'Humour is borderless. People across cultures see funny things, and the reach of these images has been far beyond what we ever imagined. It's about making people smile and encouraging them to care.'

Over the years, the awards have expanded into different categories, featuring everything from majestic lions to lesser-known critters. There's even a video section now, adding a whole new way to catch wildlife's funniest moments. The 2024 winning clip, for example, showed a fox zooming around in a way that's guaranteed to make you laugh – proof that wildlife photography doesn't always have to be serious to make an impact.

A decade of impact

As the competition celebrates its tenth anniversary, Tom reflects on how far it's come. 'It's been an incredible journey. When we started, we were just two people with an idea. We have a fantastic team, global recognition, and a meaningful connection with various charitable enterprises.'

One key aspect of the competition's success is its connection to conservation. Each year, the Comedy Wildlife Awards collaborates with various charities focused on wildlife protection, preservation, and sustainability.

The images submitted to the competition serve as both entertainment and a powerful tool for promoting positive action toward conservation. Through this combination of humour and advocacy, the awards have raised awareness about some of the most pressing issues that are facing wildlife today.

'For me, what makes this competition special is Tom and Paul's dedication to conservation,' says Mary McGowan, 2018 Overall Winner. 'It's a worthy cause that is close to my heart.'

Tom and Paul have worked hard to ensure that the competition is not just about showcasing funny images but also about fostering a meaningful conversation around the cons. As Paul explains, 'Humour is the key. People are more likely to engage with a positive message about conservation if they've already connected emotionally through laughter. That emotional connection can lead to action.'

A legacy of laughter and conservation

With the 11th edition of the Comedy Wildlife Awards now open for entries (closing date 30 June 2025) there's no doubt that the competition has left a lasting impact on wildlife photography. It has proven that conservation doesn't always have to be serious and that humour can be a powerful tool for raising awareness and inspiring change. For photographers, it offers a platform to showcase their creativity and skill while contributing to a global cause.

Nikon Creator and judge Hannah Stitfall adds, 'I'm really looking forward to joining the judging panel for this year's Comedy Wildlife Awards! The ethos of the awards resonates with me, as using humour to encourage conversation around sustainability and wildlife conservation is refreshing, especially if it widens our understanding of and engagement with the natural world around us.'

The Nikon Comedy Wildlife Awards has shown us that nature, in all its beauty and unpredictability, has a humorous side worth celebrating. In doing so, the competition has also made us smile, laugh, and – most importantly – care about the world around us.

© TAPANI LINNANMÄKI / NIKON COMEDY WILDLIFE AWARDS

© JENNIFER HADLEY / NIKON COMEDY WILDLIFE AWARDS

© SARAH SKINNER / NIKON COMEDY WILDLIFE AWARDS

Left: Shake Ruffle Rattle and Roll by Tapani Linnanmäki, 2024 People's Choice winner

Top right: Not So Cat-like Reflexes by Jennifer Hadley, 2022 Winner

Above: Grab Life by the... by Sarah Skinner, 2019 Winner

Here's to another decade of laughter and conservation.

'You can care deeply and still laugh,' agrees Milko Marchetti, 2024 Overall Winner, known for his hilarious image of a squirrel getting stuck in a tree hole. 'That's the genius of this competition – it makes people feel something.'

Through laughter, the competition has connected people with the wonders of wildlife and sparked meaningful conversations about conservation. With the global community continuing to grow, there's no telling where the next decade of the awards will take us.

So, whether you're a seasoned photographer or an aspiring wildlife enthusiast, don't miss your chance to be part of this incredible movement. Entries for the 2025 competition are still open until midnight on 30 June – submit your funniest shots or videos before the deadline!

For more hilarious moments and conservation inspiration, follow **@comedywildlifephoto** on Instagram and stay up-to-date with all the latest news. Visit **www.comedywildlifephoto.com** to enter this year's competion and for full details.

Buy the book

Can't get out on safari? Let the wildlife come to you with these beautiful books. **Amy Davies** selects some recent releases for your shelf

Wildlife photography is many people's favourite genre, but it's fair to say that it's not always the most accessible subject.

That's where having a shelf full of beautiful books on the subject can help you to escape to distant lands, pretend you got up at 3am for the dawn chorus, or just show off how much patience you need to capture that split-second animal behaviour.

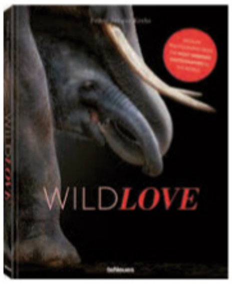
You can also learn a huge amount about the techniques and fieldcraft of animal and wildlife photography by flicking through these tomes. It's fascinating too, to see all of the different aspects of wildlife photography that there is out there – from the more straightforward, record-like shots, to those that treat flora and fauna as portrait subjects, deserving of artistic approaches.

In this selection, I've chosen some traditional wildlife photographers, and others who definitely fall into that fine-art type category. Each of them show us just how difficult it is to master the technique, but just how rewarding it is when you get it right. They also show us how wonderful it is to see an image printed out, rather than just stuck on a screen.

If you've got a favourite wildlife book – or two – please let us know via the usual methods listed on the Welcome page. We'd love to share our reader recommendations around and really celebrate the power of print.

'The anatomy lesson'

© 2024 PEDRO JARQUE KREBS



WildLOVE by Pedro Jarque Krebs

£29.95, teNeues, hardback, 224 pages, ISBN: 9783961716203

This is an absolutely stunning collection of animal portraits from the multiple-award-winning photographer Pedro Jarque Krebs. In his work, Krebs aims to show off an animal's character, bringing out their 'people'-like personality.

Many of the portraits have been artfully staged but we also see some spontaneous snapshots from the wild. There are more than 180 images to pore over, all printed in beautiful coffee-table format – plus plenty of additional information about the species depicted.

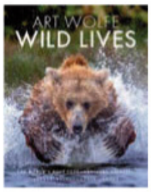
Sometimes Krebs uses tongue-in-cheek humour to portray the animals, attempting to show their majesty and beauty, but at the same time to convey their vulnerability. Here we can see a human side to lions, flamingos, and more besides, as they are depicted with both empathy and humour. A striking black background allows the animals' colours and textures – as well as their personalities – to shine through.

© ART WOLFE

A brown bear fishing for sockeye salmon in Alaska

Wild Lives: The World's Most Extraordinary Wildlife by Art Wolfe

£80, Insight Edition, hardback, 352 pages, ISBN: 9781683830832



Art Wolfe has been at the forefront of nature photography for most of his 40-year career. His 60-plus books include landmark titles such as *Migrations* (1994) and *The Living Wild* (2000).

During that time, the world's wildlife has been under increasing pressure from climate breakdown, the destruction of natural habitats and poaching. As popular documentaries such as *Planet Earth III* increasingly acknowledge, it's no longer enough to simply show pristine environments and amazing species and ignore the large-scale changes to the natural world. Accordingly, this book's ten chapters cover the variety of environments on Earth, including Arctic Tundra, Temperate Forests and Desert. Each chapter includes an essay by biologist Gregory Green, who describes the environments and their wildlife along with the conservation challenges that affect them.

Wolfe has a glass-half-full approach that means the emphasis is on the beauty of nature and the successes of wildlife conservation. This book is a celebration of the wildlife we still have, rather than what is being lost. It's an outstanding collection of images by a master photographer.

© STEPHEN LARDER

A hawksbill turtle captured at the Southern Great Barrier Reef

The Ocean Speaks by Matt Porteous and Tamsin Raine

£28, White Lion Publishing, hardback, 240 pages, ISBN: 9780177288935

THE
OCEAN
SPEAKS

More than 70% of the Earth's surface is covered by water, and most of that water is contained within its five oceans.

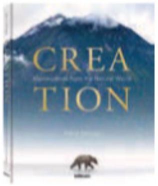
Our oceans play a vital role in making our planet habitable: regulating the temperature, providing a home for some 250,000 known species and providing sustenance for billions of people. And yet, the health of our oceans is under threat like never before: from climate change, overfishing, pollution and habitat destruction.

This book is the work of a charity called Ocean Culture Life, and aims to raise awareness of the various issues and how they are being addressed. It contains over 60 illustrated essays and stories from our aquatic realms, by 45 ocean experts – narratives that take the reader on an informative journey of discovery and wonder, illustrated with beautiful photography.

Matt Porteous and Tamsin Raine have done a great job of curating this collection, and many of the photographs in *The Ocean Speaks* are as stunning as they are important. If you love the sea and the amazing, beautiful creatures that live in it, then you will certainly enjoy this book.

Creation – Masterpieces from the Natural World by Harry Skeggs

£49.95, teNeues, hardback, 256 pages, ISBN: 9783961715558



There are many wildlife photography books, but in this one, we find someone who not only has a fantastic command of the camera, but also dedication to both the subject matter and the art of representing it.

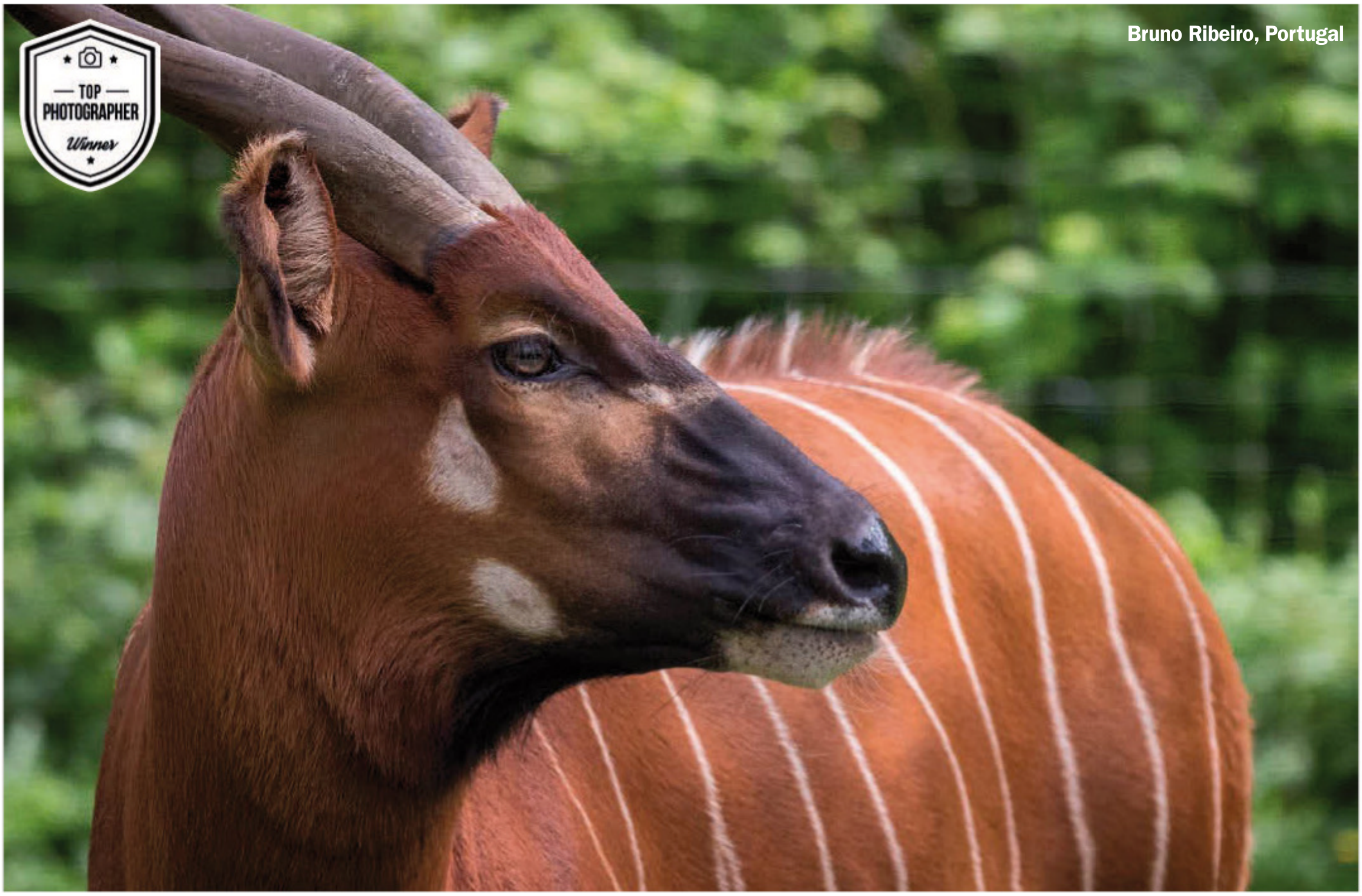
The book is divided into different chapters, which document a variety of species from across the world. Each section is accompanied by text from Harry Skeggs, describing more about the animals shown, the habitat in which they live, the preparations necessary for the journey and the photoshoot, as well as the artistry behind certain stylistic and photographic choices.

By combining words and pictures in this way, you get a real sense of just how much joy, admiration and respect Harry has for the natural world – it really shines through his work. We find out that sometimes Harry would invest months, if not years, of preparation for each shot.

Considering that over 100 images are featured in this beautiful book, it's quite a feat how many of them have turned out to be stunning. This is easily one of the finest wildlife books you can pick up – we liked it so much that we awarded Harry our inaugural Nature and Environment award at the AP Awards earlier this year.

© HARRY SKEGGS

Yesterday's Kings, March 2022. King Penguin, Jason Harbour, South Georgia



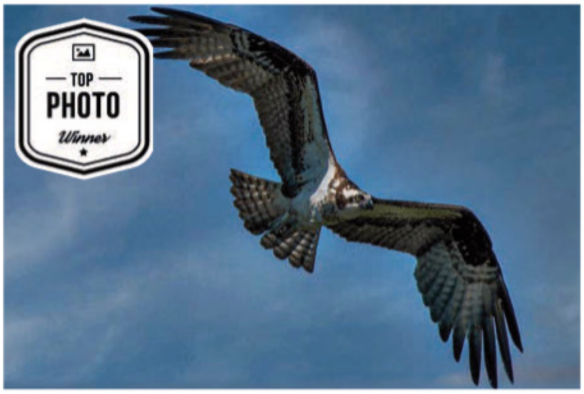
Bruno Ribeiro, Portugal

Meet the GuruShots winners

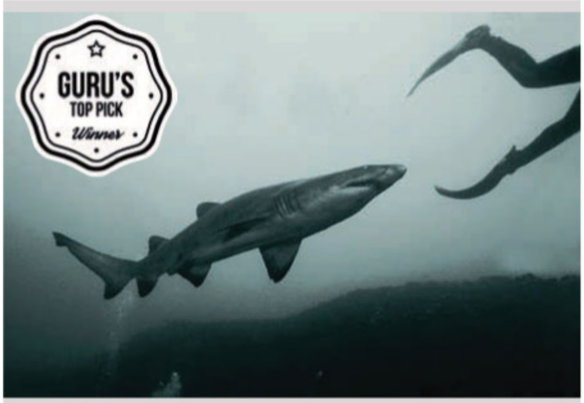
AP showcases the very best images sent in by GuruShots users on the theme of Wildlife Wonder

GuruShots, the organisers of the world's greatest photography games and communities, recently challenged its users to send in their best images on the theme of Wildlife Wonder. *Amateur Photographer* is partnering with GuruShots and we are now pleased to publish the 18 highest ranked photographs by those who entered. Also, remember that you can view every single image that made it into the Top 500 at amateurphotographer.com

For more inspiring challenges to improve your photo skills and keep motivated, see **gurushots.com**



Fabiano Dos Santos, United States



Sergiy Glushchenko, Ukraine

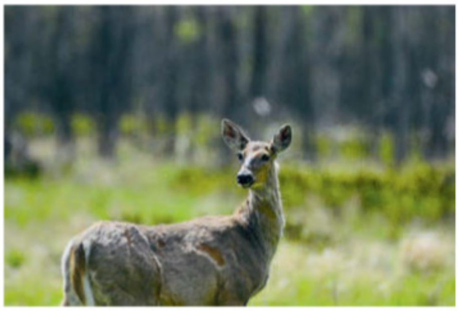
Sean Mason-Farme, United Kingdom

Michael Firmbach, Germany

Hester Hoornstra, Netherlands

Nidhi Rathi Saraogi, India

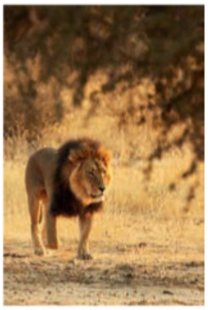
Maria Fremming, Denmark


Deborah SquierBernst, Canada

Gregor Kobilica, Slovenia

Luca Sharabidze, United States

Roy Egloff, Switzerland


Isak Venter, South Africa

Itay Barak, Israel

Tamesha Roughton, United States

Daniel Boland, United Kingdom

Frank Shufletoski, Canada

Jamil Badalov, Azerbaijan

From the makers of Amateur Photographer magazine

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Buying Guide

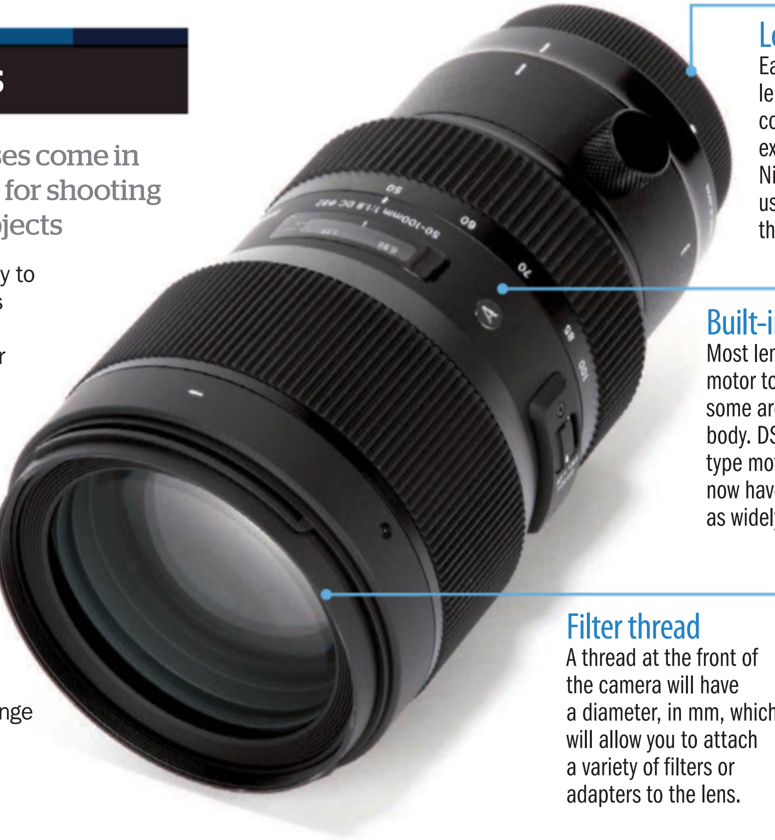
177 lenses listed & rated

Our comprehensive listing of key specifications for DSLR lenses

DSLR Lenses

Interchangeable lenses come in a huge array of types for shooting different kinds of subjects

IN GENERAL, the easiest way to expand the kinds of pictures you can take is by buying different types of lenses. For example, telephoto lenses let you zoom in on distant subjects, while macro lenses enable close-ups of small objects. Large-aperture lenses allow you to isolate subjects against blurred backgrounds, or shoot in low light without having to raise the ISO too high. Meanwhile, all-in-one superzooms cover a wide range of subjects, but usually with rather lower optical quality.



Lens mounts
Each manufacturer has its own lens mount and most aren't compatible with one another. For example, a Canon DSLR can't use Nikon lenses, although you can use independent brands if you get them with the right mount.

Built-in focus motor
Most lenses now incorporate an internal motor to drive the autofocus, although some are still driven from the camera body. DSLR lenses often use ultrasonic-type motors for fast focusing, but some now have video-friendly stepper motors as widely used in mirrorless systems.

Filter thread
A thread at the front of the camera will have a diameter, in mm, which will allow you to attach a variety of filters or adapters to the lens.

Maximum aperture
Wider apertures mean you can use faster, motion-stopping shutter speeds.

OUR GUIDE TO THE SUFFIXES USED BY LENS MANUFACTURERS

AF	Nikon AF lenses driven from camera
AF-S	Nikon lenses with Silent Wave Motor
AF-P	Nikon lenses with stepper motors
AL	Pentax lenses with aspheric elements
APD	Fujifilm lenses with apodisation elements
APO	Sigma Apochromatic lenses
ASPH	Aspherical elements
AW	Pentax all-weather lenses
CS	Samyang lenses for APS-C cropped sensors
D	Nikon lenses that communicate distance info
DA	Pentax lenses optimised for APS-C-sized sensors
DC	Nikon defocus-control portrait lenses
DC	Sigma's lenses for APS-C digital
DG	Sigma's designation for full-frame lenses
Di	Tamron lenses for full-frame sensors
Di-II	Tamron lenses designed for APS-C DSLRs
Di-III	Tamron lenses for mirrorless cameras
DN	Sigma's lenses for mirrorless cameras
DO	Canon diffractive optical element lenses
DT	Sony lenses for APS-C-sized sensors
DX	Nikon's lenses for DX-format digital
DS	Canon's Defocus Smoothing technology
E	Nikon lenses with electronic apertures
E	Sony lenses for APS-C mirrorless
ED	Extra-low Dispersion elements
EF	Canon's lenses for full-frame DSLRs
EF-S	Canon's lenses for APS-C DSLRs
EF-M	Canon's lenses for APS-C mirrorless
EX	Sigma's 'Excellent' range
FA	Pentax full-frame lenses
FE	Sony lenses for full-frame mirrorless
G	Nikon lenses without an aperture ring
HSM	Sigma's Hypersonic Motor
IS	Canon's Image-Stabilised lenses
L	Canon's 'Luxury' range of high-end lenses
LD	Low-Dispersion glass
LM	Fujifilm Linear Motor
MP-E	Canon's high-magnification macro lens
OIS	Optical Image Stabilisation
OS	Sigma's Optically Stabilised lenses
PC-E	Nikon tilt-and-shift lenses
PF	Nikon Phase Fresnel optics
PZD	Tamron Piezo Drive focus motor
RF	Canon full-frame mirrorless lenses
S	Nikon's premium lenses for mirrorless
SAM	Sony Smooth Autofocus Motor
SDM	Pentax's Sonic Direct Drive Motor
SMC	Pentax Super Multi Coating
SP	Tamron's Super Performance range
SSM	Sony Supersonic Motor lenses
STF	Sony and Laowa Smooth Trans Focus
STM	Canon lenses with stepper motor
TS-E	Canon Tilt-and-Shift lens
UMC	Ultra Multi Coated
USM	Canon lenses with an Ultrasonic Motor
USD	Tamron Ultrasonic Drive motor
VC	Tamron's Vibration Compensation
VR	Nikon's Vibration Reduction feature
WR	Weather Resistant
Z	Nikon's lenses for mirrorless cameras

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DSLR Lenses

				IMAGE STABILISATION	SONY ALPHA	CANON	FOUR THIRDS	NIKON	PENTAX	SIGMA	FULL FRAME	MIN FOCUS (CM)	FILTER THREAD (MM)	DIAMETER (MM)	LENGTH (MM)	WEIGHT (G)
LENS	**RRP**	**SCORE**	**SUMMARY**		**MOUNT**									**DIMENSIONS**		
CANON DSLR																
EF-S 10-18mm f/4.5-5.6 IS STM	£299	4★	A superb ultra-wideangle that's a must-have for anyone shooting landscapes and cityscapes	·		·						22	67	74.6	72	240
EF-S 10-22mm f/3.5-4.5 USM	£990	4★	A good performer, with solid MTF curves and minimal chromatic aberration			·						24	77	83.5	89.8	385
EF-S 17-55mm f/2.8 IS USM	£795	4★	Very capable lens with three-stop image stabilisation, Super Spectra coating and a circular aperture	·		·						35	77	83.5	110.6	645
EF-S 18-55mm f/4-5.6 IS STM	£220		Latest standard zoom for Canon's APS-C EOS DSLRs, with compact design and updated optics	·		·						25	58	66.5	61.8	215
EF-S 18-135mm f/3.5-5.6 IS USM	£500		Versatile zoom with new Nano USM focus technology and optional power zoom adapter	·		·						39	67	77.4	96	515
EF-S 24mm f/2.8 STM	£165	4★	Bargain price, tiny carry-everywhere size and a highly competent imaging performance			·						16	52	68.2	22.8	125
EF-S 55-250mm f/4-5.6 IS STM	£265		A compact telephoto lens featuring smooth, quiet STM focusing when shooting movies	·		·						110	58	70	111.2	375
EF 8-15mm f/4 L USM	£1499		Impressive-looking fisheye zoom lens from Canon			·					·	15	n/a	78.5	83	540
EF 11-24mm f/4 L USM	£2799	5★	Long-awaited by Canon full-frame users, this is the world's widest-angle rectilinear zoom lens			·					·	28	n/a	108	132	1180
EF 16-35mm f/2.8 L III USM	£2150		Revamped wideangle zoom includes new optics in a weather-sealed lens barrel			·					·	28	82	89.5	127.5	790
EF 16-35mm f/4 L IS USM	£1199	4★	Versatile and with a useful IS system, this is a very good ultra-wideangle zoom for full-frame cameras	·		·					·	28	77	82.6	112.8	615
EF 17-40mm f/4 L USM	£940	4★	Designed to match the needs of demanding professionals – and does so with ease			·					·	28	77	83.5	96.8	500
EF 24mm f/1.4 L II USM	£2010		Subwavelength structure coating, together with UD and aspherical elements			·					·	25	77	83.5	86.9	650
EF 24-70mm f/2.8 L II USM	£2300	5★	Professional-quality standard zoom lens with a fast aperture			·					·	38	82	88.5	113	805
EF 24-105mm f/4 L IS II USM	£1129	4★	Reworked workhorse zoom for full-frame cameras uses an all-new optical design	·		·					·	45	77	83.5	118	795
EF 35mm f/1.4 L II USM	£1799	5★	An outstanding addition to the L-series line-up			·					·	28	72	80.4	104.4	760
EF 50mm f/1.2 L USM	£1910		Very wide maximum aperture and Super Spectra coatings, and a circular aperture			·					·	45	72	85.8	65.5	580
EF 50mm f/1.4 USM	£450	5★	Brilliant performer, with a highly consistent set of MTF curves. AF motor is a tad noisy, though			·					·	45	58	73.8	50.5	290
EF 50mm f/1.8 STM	£130	5★	Lightest EF lens in the range, with wide maximum aperture and a Micro Motor			·					·	35	49	69.2	39.3	130
EF 70-200mm f/2.8 L IS III USM	£2150		Updates Canon's excellent pro workhorse zoom with water-repellent fluorine coatings	·		·					·	120	77	88.8	199	1480
EF 70-200mm f/4L IS II USM	£1300		Upgraded premium telephoto zoom promises five stops of image stabilisation	·		·					·	100	72	80	176	780
EF 70-300mm f/4.5-5.6 IS II USM	£499	4.5★	Mid-range telephoto zoom offers really good optics and fast, silent autofocus	·		·					·	120	67	80	145.5	710
EF 75-300mm f/4-5.6 III	£300		Essentially the same lens as the 75-300mm f/4-5.6 III USM but with no USM			·					·	150	58	71	122	480
EF 85mm f/1.4L IS USM	£1570	5★	Sublime, highly desirable portrait lens combines large aperture and optical image stabilisation	·		·					·	85	77	88.6	105.4	950
EF 85mm f/1.8 USM	£470	5★	Non-rotating front ring thanks to rear-focusing system, as well as USM			·					·	85	58	75	71.5	425
EF 100mm f/2.8 L Macro IS USM	£1060	5★	Stunning MTF figures from this pro-grade macro optic	·		·					·	30	67	77.7	123	625
EF 100-400mm f/4.5-5.6 L IS II USM	£1999	4.5★	L-series construction and optics, including fluorite and Super UD elements	·		·					·	98	77	94	193	1640
TS-E 17mm f/4 L	£2920		Ultra-wideangle tilt-and-shift optic with independent rotation of the tilt and shift movements			·					·	25	77	88.9	106.9	820
TS-E 24mm f/3.5 L II	£2550		Tilt-and-shift optic with independent tilt-and-shift rotation and redesigned coatings			·					·	21	82	88.5	106.9	780
TS-E 50mm f/2.8L Macro	£2500		Tilt-and-shift macro lens for specialist product photography, with 1:2 magnification			·					·	27	77	86.9	114.9	945
TS-E 90mm f/2.8L Macro	£2500		Tilt-and-shift macro lens for specialist product photography, with 1:2 magnification			·					·	39	77	86.9	116.5	915
TS-E 135mm f/4L Macro	£2500		Tilt-and-shift macro lens for specialist product photography, with 1:2 magnification			·					·	49	82	88.5	139.1	1110

ALL PRICES ARE RRPS, STREET PRICES MAY VARY

We've tried our hardest to ensure that the information in this guide is as complete and accurate as possible. However, some errors will inevitably have crept in along the way: if you spot one, please let us know by emailing ap.ed@kelsey.co.uk. Unfortunately we don't have space to list every single product on the market, so we don't include the most expensive speciality items. **Before making a purchase we advise you to check prices, along with any crucial specifications or requirements, with either a reputable retailer or the manufacturer's website.**

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DSLR Lenses

				IMAGE STABILISATION	SONY ALPHA	CANON	FOUR THIRDS	NIKON	PENTAX	SIGMA	FULL FRAME	MIN FOCUS (CM)	FILTER THREAD (MM)	DIAMETER (MM)	LENGTH (MM)	WEIGHT (G)
LENS	RRP	SCORE	SUMMARY		MOUNT									DIMENSIONS		
LAOWA DSLR																
12mm f/2.8 Zero D	£899		Ultra-wideangle lens for full-frame DSLRs that exhibits minimal distortion		·	·		·	·		·	18	77	74.8	82.8	609
14mm f/4 Zero-D DSLR	£499		Relatively compact and lightweight ultra-wideangle manual focus prime that promises low distortion			·		·			·	15	67	72.5	75	320
15mm f/4 1:1 Macro	£449	4★	Unusual wideangle lens that offers 1:1 Macro together with vertical shift movements on APS-C cameras		·	·		·	·		·	12	77	83.8	64.7	410
15mm f/4.5 Zero-D Shift	£1249	4★	The world's widest-angle shift lens offers +/-11mm movement in any direction			·		·			·	20	n/a	79	103	597
20mm f/4 Zero-D Shift	£1139		Wideangle shift lens that offers +/-11mm movement and promises zero distortion			·		·			·	25	82	91	95	747
24mm f/14 2x Macro Probe	£1599		Unique specialist macro lens with submersible front barrel and built-in LED lights			·		·			·	47	n/a	38	408	474
24mm f/14 2x Peri Probe	£2449		Development of macro probe design with swappable straight and 90° periscopic front sections			·		·			·		n/a	61.3	408	770
25mm f/2.8 Ultra Macro 2.5x - 5x	£399		Unusual lens designed solely for ultra-close-up shooting, with magnification from 2.5x to 5x			·		·	·		·	17.3	n/a	65	82	400
60mm f/2.8 2X Ultra Macro	£319	3.5★	With 2:1 Macro, an all-in-one option for normal portrait photography as well as ultra-macro		·	·		·	·		·	18.5	62	95	70	503
100mm f/2.8 2:1 Ultra Macro APO	£469		Full-frame macro lens with twice-life-size magnification and apochromatic design			·		·	·		·	24.7	67	125	72	638
105mm f/2 (T3.2) STF	£649	4★	Designed for full-frame DSLRS, and features an apodisation element that renders lovely bokeh		·	·		·	·		·	90	67	98.9	76	745
NIKON DSLR																
10-20mm f/4.5-5.6 G VR AF-P DX	£330	3.5★	Inexpensive wide zoom for DX DSLRs has effective image stabilisation but rather average optics	·				·				22	72	77	73	230
10-24mm f/3.5-4.5 G ED AF-S DX	£834	4★	MTF performance is good from wide open to f/11, only breaking down past f/22					·				24	77	82.5	87	460
18-140mm f/3.5-5.6 G ED VR AF-S DX	£579		A compact and lightweight DX-format zoom, this lens is a great all-rounder	·				·				45	67	78	97	490
18-300mm f/3.5-6.3 G ED VR	£849		New DX-format 16.7x zoom with super-telephoto reach – a compact walk-around lens	·				·				48	67	78.5	99	550
35mm f/1.8 G AF-S DX	£208	5★	Designed for DX-format DSLRs, a great standard prime lens					·				30	52	70	52.5	200
40mm f/2.8 G AF-S DX Micro	£250	5★	A budget-priced macro lens that delivers the goods on multiple fronts					·				20	52	68.5	64.5	235
85mm f/3.5 G ED AF-S DX VR	£522		DX-format Micro lens with a 1:1 reproduction ratio, VR II system and ED glass	·				·				28	52	73	98.5	355
8-15mm f/3.5-4.5 E ED Fisheye AF-S	£1299		Fisheye zoom for full-frame DSLRs that gives a circular view at 8mm and full-frame coverage at 15mm					·			·	16	n/a	77.5	83	485
14-24mm f/2.8 G ED AF-S	£1670	5★	A remarkable piece of kit, producing sharp images with little chromatic aberration					·			·	28	n/a	98	131.5	970
16-35mm f/4 G ED AF-S VR	£1072	5★	A fantastic lens that deserves to be taken seriously, with very little CA throughout	·				·			·	28	77	82.5	125	685
20mm f/1.8 G ED AF-S	£679		A fast FX-format prime lens that's compact and lightweight					·			·	20	77	82.5	80.5	335
24mm f/1.4 G ED AF-S	£1990	5★	Nothing short of stunning. Aside from its high price, there is very little to dislike about this optic					·			·	25	77	83	88.5	620
24mm f/1.8 G ED AF-S	£629		Fast FX-format lens that aims to appeal to landscape, interior, architecture and street photographers					·			·	23	72	77.5	83	355
24-70mm f/2.8 E ED VR	£1849	5★	Nikon's latest pro-spec standard zoom looks like its best lens yet	·				·			·	38	82	88	154.5	1070
24-85mm f/3.5-4.5 G ED VR	£520	5★	FX-format standard zoom with Auto Tripod detection and VR	·				·			·	38	72	78	82	465
24-120mm f/4 G ED AF-S VR	£1072	5★	Constant maximum aperture of f/4 and the addition of VR makes this a superb lens	·				·			·	45	77	84	103	710
28mm f/1.4 E ED AF-S	£2080		Boasts a dust- and drip-resistant build for reliable shooting in challenging weather conditions					·			·	28	77	83	100.5	645
28mm f/1.8 G ED AF-S	£619	5★	If you crave a wide aperture and prefer a single focal length then this Nikon prime delivers					·			·	25	67	73	80	330
35mm f/1.4 G ED AF-S	£1735	5★	A Nano Crystal-coated lens designed for the FX range					·			·	30	67	83	89.5	600
35mm f/1.8 G ED AF-S	£479		Fast FX-format prime lens with bright f/1.8 aperture. Versatile and lightweight					·			·	25	58	72	71.5	305
50mm f/1.4 G AF-S	£376	5★	Internal focusing and superior AF drive makes this a good alternative to the D-series 50mm f/1.4	·				·			·	45	58	73.5	54	280
50mm f/1.8 D AF	£135		Compact, lightweight, affordable prime, will stop down to f/22					·			·	45	52	63	39	160
50mm f/1.8 G AF-S	£200	5★	A cut-price standard lens for FX shooters or a short telephoto on DX-format DSLRs					·			·	45	58	72	52.5	185
58mm f/1.4 G AF-S	£1599	4★	FX-format full-frame premium prime lens with large f/1.4 aperture					·			·	58	72	85	70	385
70-200mm f/2.8 E FL ED VR AF-S	£2650		Latest update to Nikon's pro workhorse fast telephoto zoom brings electronic aperture control	·				·			·	110	77	88.5	202.5	1430
70-300mm f/4.5-5.6 E ED VR AF-P	£750		Nikon's first full-frame lens to feature a stepper motor for autofocus	·				·			·	1200	67	80.5	146	680
80-400mm f/4.5-5.6 G ED VR AF-S	£1899	5★	Successor to the 80-400mm f/4.5-5.6D ED VR, focusing is excellent at tracking fast-moving subjects	·				·			·	175	77	95.5	203	1570
85mm f/1.4 G AF-S	£1532	5★	Fast mid-tele lens with an internal focusing system and rounded diaphragm					·			·	85	77	86.5	84	595
85mm f/1.8 G AF-S	£470	5★	Rear-focusing system and distance window in this medium telephoto lens					·			·	80	67	80	73	350
105mm f/1.4 E ED AF-S	£2049		A 105mm FX-format prime lens with bright f/1.4 aperture, ideal for portraiture					·			·	100	82	94.5	106	985
200-500mm f/5.6 E ED VR AF-S	£1179		A super-telephoto zoom lens compatible with Nikon FX-format DSLR cameras	·				·			·	220	95	108	267.5	2300
300mm f/4 E PF ED VR AF-S	£1230	5★	Light, compact AF-S full-frame telephoto lens with ED glass elements	·				·			·	140	77	89	147.5	755
19mm f/4 E ED PC	£3300		Super-wideangle tilt-and-shift lens for architecture and landscape photography					·			·	25	n/a	89	124	885
24mm f/3.5 D ED PC-E	£1774		Perspective Control lens with Nano Crystal Coating and electronic control over aperture					·			·	21	77	82.5	108	730
45mm f/2.8 D ED PC-E Micro	£1393		Perspective Control (PC-E) standard lens used in specialised fields such as studio and architecture					·			·	25	77	82.5	112	740

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DSLR Lenses

				IMAGE STABILISATION	SONY ALPHA	CANON	FOUR THIRDS	NIKON	PENTAX	SIGMA	FULL FRAME	MIN FOCUS (CM)	FILTER THREAD (MM)	DIAMETER (MM)	LENGTH (MM)	WEIGHT (G)
LENS	RRP	SCORE	SUMMARY		MOUNT									DIMENSIONS		
PENTAX DSLR																
DA 10-17mm f/3.5-4.5 HD Fisheye ED	£499		Updated fisheye zoom lens gains refreshed cosmetic design, new optical coatings and removable hood						·			14	n/a	70	67.5	317
DA* 11-18mmF2.8 ED DC AW HD	£1399		Premium fast ultra-wideangle zoom, includes all-weather construction and innovative focus clamp						·			30	82	90	100	704
DA 15mm f/4 smc ED AL Limited	£820		Limited-edition lens with hybrid aspherical and extra-low-dispersion elements						·			18	49	39.5	63	212
FA 15-30mm f/2.8 ED SM WR HD	£1500		Weather-resistant ultra-wideangle zoom with fast maximum aperture and fixed petal-type hood						·		·	28	n/a	98.5	143.5	1040
DA* 16-50mm f/2.8 ED PLM AW HD	£1500		All-new premium large-aperture standard zoom with updated optics and electromagnetic aperture control						·			30	77	84	117	712
DA 16-85mm f/3.5-5.6 ED DC WR	£600		Weather-resistant, this zoom features a round-shaped diaphragm to produce beautiful bokeh						·			35	72	78	94	488
DA 18-55mm f/3.5-5.6 smc AL WR	£229		A weather-resistant construction and an aspherical element, as well as SP coating						·			25	52	68.5	67.5	230
DA 18-135mm f/3.5-5.6 DA ED DC WR	£600	3.5★	A weather-resistant mid-range zoom lens						·			40	62	73	76	405
DA 20-40mm f/2.8-4 ED Limited DC WR	£829		With state-of-the-art HD coating, a completely round-shaped diaphragm, and weather resistant						·			28	55	68.5	71	283
HD-FA 21mm f/2.4 ED Limited DC WR	£1499		Ultra-wide addition to the premium Limited line-up, with aluminium barrel and electromagnetic aperture motor						·		·	18	67	74	89	416
DA 21mm f/3.2 smc AL Limited	£600		This limited-edition optic offers a floating element for extra-close focusing						·			20	49	63	25	140
FA 24-70mm f/2.8 ED SDM WR	£1149		Full-frame-compatible premium standard zoom – includes a HD coating to minimise flare and ghosting						·		·	38	82	109.5	88.5	787
FA 28-105mm f/3.5-5.6 ED DC HD	£549		Standard zoom lens for the K-1 full-frame DSLR that's much more affordable than the 24-70mm f/2.8						·		·	50	62	73	86.5	440
HD-FA 31mm f/1.8 Limited	£1100		Premium aluminium-bodied wideangle prime boasts an aperture ring plus HD and fluorine coatings						·		·	30	58	69	65	341
FA 35mm f/2 HD	£399		Latest version of venerable Pentax fast prime features a multi-layer HD coating						·		·	30	49	64	44.5	193
DA 35mm f/2.4 smc DS AL	£180	5★	A budget-priced prime lens for beginners						·			30	49	63	45	124
DA 35mm f/2.8 smc Macro	£640	4.5★	Despite slight edge softness, this lens performs excellently and is a pleasure to use						·			14	49	46.5	63	215
DA 40mm f/2.8 smc Limited	£450		Pancake lens with SMC coating and Quick Shift focusing system						·			40	49	63	15	90
HD-FA 43mm f/1.9 Limited	£650		Classic full-frame fast prime with perfect focal length for everyday use						·		·	45	49	64	27	155
FA* 50mm f/1.4 SDM AW HD	£1200		Premium fast prime with dustproof, weather-resistant design and electromagnetic aperture						·		·	40	72	80	106	910
HD-FA 50mm f/1.4	£399		Updated large-aperture prime with HD coatings and refreshed cosmetic design						·		·	45	49	65	40.5	223
FA 50mm f/1.4 smc Classic	£449		Compact fast prime with film-era optics, aperture ring, and coatings designed to give 'rainbow flare'						·		·	45	49	65	37	216
DA 50mm f/1.8 smc DA	£249	4★	Affordable short telephoto lens ideal for portraits						·			45	52	38.5	63	122
D-FA 50mm f/2.8 smc Macro	£550		Macro lens capable of 1:1 reproduction and with a Quick Shift focus mechanism						·		·	19	49	60	67.5	265
DA* 50-135mm f/2.8 smc ED IF SDM	£1200	4★	Constant f/2.8 aperture; well suited to portraiture and mid-range action subjects						·			100	67	76.5	136	765
DA 50-200mm f/4-5.6 smc ED WR	£210		Weather-resistant construction, Quick Shift focus system and an SP coating						·			n/a	49	69	79.5	285
DA* 55mm f/1.4 smc SDM	£800	4.5★	Despite questions about the particular sample tested, this lens scores highly						·			45	58	70.5	66	375
DA 55-300mm f/4.5-6.3 ED PLM WR RE	£400		Compact weather resistant telephoto zoom has video-friendly fast and silent autofocus motor						·			95	58	76.5	89	442
DA 60-250mm f/4 smc ED IF SDM	£1450	4.5★	With a constant f/4 aperture and an ultrasonic motor for speedy focusing						·			110	67	167.5	82	1040
DA 70mm f/2.4 smc AL Limited	£600		Medium telephoto lens with an aluminium construction and a Super Protect coating						·			70	49	63	26	130
D-FA* 70-200mm f/2.8 ED DC AW	£1850		Fast telephoto zoom in Pentax's high-performance Star (*) series developed for best image rendition						·		·	120	77	91.5	203	1755
D-FA 70-210mm F4 ED SDM WR	£1199		Compact telephoto zoom with constant f/4 maximum aperture and weather-resistant construction						·		·	95	67	78.5	175	819
HD-FA 77mm f/1.8 Limited	£800		Renewed version of short telephoto portrait prime that features a traditional aperture ring						·		·	70	49	48	64	270
D FA* 85mm f/1.4 SDM AW	£1999		Upcoming large-aperture short telephoto prime promises premium optics and weather-sealing						·		·	85	82	95	123.5	1255
HD-FA 100mm f/2.8 ED AW Macro	£699		Updated 1:1 macro lens boasts improved optical formula and all-weather construction						·		·	30	49	65	80.5	348
FA 150-450mm f/4.5-5.6 ED DC AW	£2000		Super-telephoto lens with weather resistance, designed to produce extra-sharp, high-contrast images						·		·	200	86	241.5	95	2000
DA* 200mm f/2.8 smc ED IF SDM	£1000	4.5★	SDM focusing system on the inside, and dirtproof and splashproof on the outside						·			120	77	83	134	825
DA* 300mm f/4 smc ED IF SDM	£1300		This tele optic promises ultrasonic focus and high image quality thanks to ED glass						·			140	77	83	184	1070
SAMYANG DSLR																
8mm f/3.5 UMC Fisheye CS II	£274		Wideangle fisheye lens designed for digital reflex cameras with APS-C sensors		·	·	·	·	·			30	n/a	75	77.8	417
10mm f/3.5 XP MF	£950		World's widest-angle rectilinear lens promises 130° field of view with minimal distortion			·		·			·	26	n/a	95	98.1	731
10mm f/2.8 ED AS NCS CS	£429		Features a nano crystal anti-reflection coating system and embedded lens hood		·	·	·	·	·			24	n/a	86	77	580
12mm f/2.8 ED AS NCS Fisheye	£430		Fisheye ultra wideangle prime lens for full-frame DSLRs		·	·	·	·	·		·	20	n/a	77.3	70.2	500
14mm f/2.4 XP MF	£899		High-end ultra-wideangle prime with premium optics and large maximum aperture			·		·			·	28	n/a	95	109.4	791
AF 14mm f/2.8	£649	4.5★	Samyang's first AF SLR lens features very decent image quality and weather-sealed construction			·		·			·	20	n/a	90.5	95.6	485
14mm f/2.8 MF Mk II	£439		Ultra-wideangle manual-focus prime with weather-sealing and de-clickable aperture ring			·		·			·	28	n/a	87	96.3	641
16mm f/2.0 ED AS UMC CS	£389		Fast wideangle lens for digital reflex cameras fitted with APS-C sensors		·	·	·	·	·			20	n/a	89.4	83	583
20mm f/1.8 ED AS UMC	£430		Large-aperture manual focus wideangle lens for full-frame DSLRs		·	·	·	·	·		·	20	77	83	113.2	520
24mm f/1.4 AS UMC	£499		Fast ultra-wideangle manual-focus lens comprising 13 elements arranged in 12 groups		·	·	·	·	·		·	25	77	95	116	680
24mm f/3.5 ED AS UMS TS	£949	3★	Tilt-and-shift wideangle lens for a fraction of the price of Canon and Nikon's offerings		·	·	·	·	·		·	20	82	86	110.5	680
35mm f/1.2 XP MF	£719		Ultra-large aperture, manual focus prime with premium optics			·					·	34	86	93	117.4	1106
35mm f/1.4 AS UMC	£369	4.5★	While manual focus only, this prime impressed us in real-world use, making it something of a bargain		·	·	·	·	·		·	30	77	83	111	660
50mm f/1.2 XP MF	£639		Large aperture manual-focus prime promises 50MP resolution			·					·	45	86	93	117.4	1200
50mm f/1.4 AS UMC	£299		Manual-focus fast standard prime for full-frame DSLRs		·	·	·	·	·		·	45	77	74.7	81.6	575
85mm f/1.2 XP MF	£899		High-end manual focus lens sports an impressively fast maximum aperture			·					·	80	86	93	98.4	1050g
AF 85mm f/1.4	£599	3★	Autofocus fast short telephoto portrait lens for use on Canon or Nikon full-frame DSLRs			·		·			·	90	77	88	72	485
85mm f/1.4 MF Mk II	£389		Large-aperture short telephoto manual-focus prime is weather-sealed and the aperture can be de-clicked			·		·			·	110	72	78	72.2	541
100mm f/2.8 ED UMC Macro	£389		Full-frame compatible, the Samyang 100mm is a true Macro lens offering 1:1 magnification		·	·	·	·	·		·	30	67	72.5	123.1	720
135mm f/2 ED UMC	£399		Manual focus portrait prime has fast aperture for subject isolation and background blur		·	·	·	·	·		·	80	77	82	122	830

ALL PRICES ARE RRPS, STREET PRICES MAY VARY

DSLR Lenses

LENS	RRP	SCORE	SUMMARY	IMAGE STABILISATION	SONY ALPHA	CANON	FOUR THIRDS	NIKON	PENTAX	SIGMA	FULL FRAME	MIN FOCUS (CM)	FILTER THREAD (MM)	DIAMETER (MM)	LENGTH (MM)	WEIGHT (G)
					MOUNT									DIMENSIONS		
SIGMA DSLR																
12-24mm f/4 DG HSM | A	£1649	5★	Premium full-frame wideangle zoom designed to have minimal distortion in its wideangle imagery			·		·		·	·	24	n/a	101	132	1150
14mm f/1.8 DG HSM | A	£1679		World's first f/1.8 ultra-wideangle prime lens for full-frame DSLRs			·		·		·	·	27	n/a	95.4	126	1170
14-24mm f/2.8 DG HSM | A	£1399	5★	Pro-specification fast ultra-wide prime for full-frame DSLRs includes weather-sealed construction			·		·		·	·	26	n/a	96.4	135.1	1150
18-35mm f/1.8 DC HSM | A	£799	5★	Said to be the world's first constant f/1.8 zoom; DoF equivalent of constant f/2.7 on full frame			·		·		·		28	72	78	121	810
20mm f/1.4 DG HSM | A	£799	5★	An outstanding wideangle fixed-focal-length lens			·		·		·	·	27.6	n/a	90.7	129.8	950
24mm f/1.4 DG HSM | A	£799	5★	The latest addition to Sigma's 'Art' line of high-quality fast primes			·		·		·	·	25	77	85	90.2	665
24-70mm f/2.8 DG OS HSM | A	£1399	5★	Latest premium fast standard zoom for full frame includes optical image stabilisation	·		·		·		·	·	37	82	88	107.6	1020
24-105mm f/4 DG OS HSM | A	£849	4.5★	Serious full-frame alternative to own-brand lenses at a lower price, with no compromises in the build	·	·	·		·		·	·	45	82	89	109	885
28mm f/1.4 DG HSM | A	£1099	4.5★	High-quality, weathersealed fast wideangle prime for full-frame DSLRs			·		·		·	·	28	77	82.8	107.1	865
35mm f/1.4 DG HSM | A	£799	5★	Superb large-aperture prime; first lens in company's 'Art' series		·	·		·	·	·	·	30	67	77	94	665
40mm f/1.4 DG HSM | A	£1100	5★	Large and heavy prime promising natural-looking perspective and top-quality optics			·		·		·	·	40	82	87.8	131	1200
50mm f/1.4 DG HSM | A	£849	5★	This lens has a unique design that pays off in truly excellent image quality		·	·		·		·	·	40	77	85.4	100	815
50-100mm f/1.8 DC HSM | A	£829	5★	This APS-C-format lens aims to cover the focal lengths of three prime lenses in one			·		·		·		37.4	82	93.5	170.7	1490
60-600mm f/4.5-6.3 DG OS HSM | S	£1899		Weathersealed 10x zoom encompasses huge range from standard to super-telephoto	·		·		·		·	·	60	105	120.4	268.9	2700
70mm f/2.8 DG Macro | A	£499		The first macro lens in Sigma's Art line-up features an extending-barrel focus-by-wire design			·		·		·	·	26	49	71	106	515
70-200mm f/2.8 DG OS HSM | S	£1349	5★	Superb large-aperture telephoto zoom shows high sharpness and minimal chromatic aberration	·		·		·		·	·	120	82	94.2	202.9	1805
85mm f/1.4 DG HSM | A	£1199	5★	Optically stunning fast short telephoto prime is the ultimate portrait lens for DSLR users			·		·		·	·	85	86	95	126	1130
100-400mm f/5-6.3 DG OS HSM | C	£799	4.5★	Relatively lightweight telezoom comes with weather-sealing and choice of push-pull or twist zoom	·		·		·		·	·	160	67	86.4	182.3	1160
105mm f/1.4 DG HSM | A	£1499	4.5★	Sigma's 'bokeh monster' super-fast portrait lens is weathersealed and comes with a tripod foot			·		·		·	·	100	105	115.9	131.5	1645
105mm f/2.8 EX DG OS HSM Macro	£649	4.5★	An optically stabilised macro lens, this super-sharp lens is one of our favourites	·		·		·		·	·	31.2	62	78	126.4	725
120-300mm f/2.8 DG HSM | S	£3599		First lens in company's 'Sports' series; switch enables adjustment of both focus speed and focus limiter		·	·		·	·	·	·	150	105	124	291	3390
135mm f/1.8 DG HSM | A	£1399	5★	Super-fast portrait prime designed to provide sufficient resolution for 50MP DSLRs			·		·		·	·	87.5	82	91.4	114.9	1130
150-600mm f/5-6.3 DG OS HSM | C	£1199		Budget 'Contemporary' version of Sigma's long-range telephoto zoom is smaller and lighter	·		·		·		·	·	280	95	105	260.1	1930
150-600mm f/5-6.3 DG OS HSM | S	£1599		This portable, high-performance telephoto zoom from Sigma's Sports line is dust and splashproof	·		·		·		·	·	260	105	121	290.2	2860
VOIGTLANDER DSLR																
28mm f/2.8 Aspherical Color-Skopar SL II-S	£499		Manual-focus wideangle prime for Nikon F-mount SLRs boasts high-quality metal construction					·			·	15	52	66.3	32.8	205
40mm f/2 Ultron SL II-S	**£470**		**Compact, manual-focus 'pancake' prime designed for use with Nikon full-frame DSLRs**					·			·	**25**	**52**	**66.3**	**37.5**	**260**
55mm f/1.2 Nokton SL II-S	£549		Manual-focus standard zoom lens for Nikon SLRs with super-large aperture and aperture ring					·			·	45	52	69	48.1	365
58mm f/1.4 Nokton SL II-S	£518		Large-aperture manual focus standard prime for Nikon SLRs, inlcuding classic film cameras					·			·	45	52	67.6	45.5	320
90mm f/2.8 APO-Skopar SL II-S	£529		Remarkably small and lightweight manual-focus short telephoto portrait prime					·			·	90	52	66.3	41	260
ZEISS DSLR																
15mm f/2.8 Milvus	£2329		This super-wideangle lens has an angle of view of 110° and uses an advanced retrofocus design			·		·			·	25	95	102.3	100.2	947
18mm f/2.8 Milvus	£1999		Compact super-wideangle lens with premium optics including a floating focus system for close-ups			·		·			·	25	77	90	93	721
21mm f/2.8 Milvus	£1299		Premium wideangle lens with complex optics designed to be free of distortion			·		·			·	22	82	95.5	95	851
25mm f/1.4 Milvus	£1999	5★	Optically excellent, large-aperture manual focus wideangle lens with weather-sealed construction			·		·			·	25	82	95.2	123	1225
35mm f/1.4 Milvus	£1699		Large aperture, premium-quality manual-focus prime with weather-sealed construction			·		·			·	30	72	84.8	124.8	1174
35mm f/2 Milvus	£829		Compact, moderate wideangle manual focus prime			·		·			·	30	58	77	83	702
50mm f/1.4 Planar T*	£559		Classic double-Gauss design manual focus standard prime for full-frame SLRs			·		·			·	45	58	71	71	380
50mm f/1.4 Milvus	£949	5★	An exceptionally good lens offering sharpness, detail, clean edges and a great user experience			·		·			·	45	67	82.5	94	922
50mm f/2 Milvus Macro	£949		Manual-focus macro lens with half-life-size magnification and stunning optics			·		·			·	24	67	81	75.3	730
85mm f/1.4 Planar T*	£989		Classic portrait prime designed to give smooth, rounded bokeh effects			·		·			·	100	72	78	88	670
85mm f/1.4 Milvus	£1379	5★	Fast 85mm manual-focus prime lens that's perfect for portraiture			·		·			·	80	77	90	113	1280
100mm f/2 Milvus Macro	£1299		A manual-focus macro lens with absolutely superb optics and half-life-size reproduction			·		·			·	88	67	80.5	104	843
135mm f/2 Milvus	£1899		Telephoto lens with a large aperture and smooth bokeh, ideal for medium-distance portrait photography			·		·			·	80	77	129	132	1123

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CANON AF LENSES USED

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18-200 F3.5/5.6 IS EFS	£299
24-70 F2.8 USM LII box	£899
24-70 F4 IS USM L	£599
24-105 F4 IS USM L	£499
28-300 F3.5/5.6 L IS USM box	£499
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85 F1.8 USM	£299
100 F2.8 IS USM L macro	£699
100 F2.8 USM macro box	£299
100-400 F4.5/5.6 LII box	£799/1399
135 F2 USM L	£599
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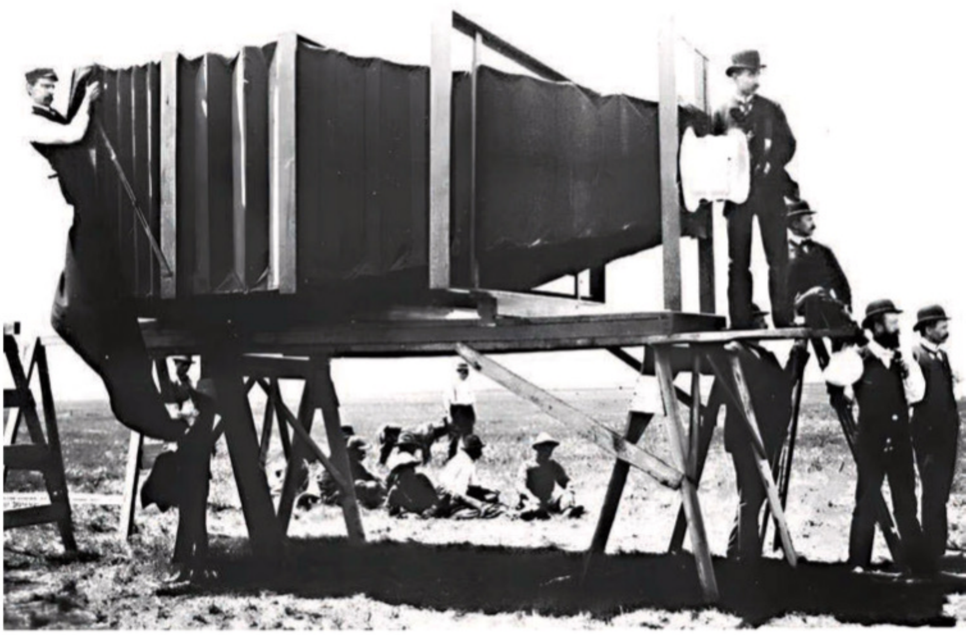
Final Analysis

John Wade considers...

The Mammoth by George R Lawrence, 1900



When it came to ingenuity with a dash of eccentricity, George R Lawrence was your man. He was a pioneer in flash photography leading to explosions that burned off his hair, eyebrows and moustache, and aerial photography, suspending himself from balloons or with a camera attached to a string of kites. So when the Chicago and Alton Railway Company built what they called 'the handsomest train in the world', they turned to Lawrence for a very special picture of it. Lawrence complied by building the world's biggest camera.

The Mammoth, seen here on a spring day in 1900 when the train picture was being taken, was 20ft long with rubber bellows on steel track wheels. Wideangle and telephoto lenses were built for it with focal lengths of 5½ft and 10ft. The glass plates on which exposures were made measured 8x4½ft and needed 10 gallons of chemicals to process their images.

It took no less than 15 men to operate the camera, including one who went inside to dust the plate and shutter blinds before an exposure of 2½ minutes. Contact prints from the plates were sent to France for the Paris Exposition of 1900 where, after doubts about authenticity had been satisfied, one picture was awarded the Grand Prize of the World for Photographic Excellence.

Obsession

That's the official story. Now meet my friend Timothy, a fellow photo historian. He and I each have our own obsession about the Mammoth. Mine is to find out what happened to it after that day in 1900. His is to prove that the whole thing was one big fake.

His doubts begin with the lens that certainly looks false, suspiciously like it might have been added in the darkroom to make the camera look even more remarkable. Then there's the claimed exposure time, achieved by removing and replacing the lens cap. Taking into account emulsion speeds of the time, this should have been measured in seconds, not minutes. And what about an article found in a 1928 copy of *Popular Mechanics* that described the Mammoth's use as a copying camera for enlarging images from smaller plates.

Suspicion

These and other anomalies led Timothy to strongly suspect that the man inside wasn't really there for a little light dusting. Did he have a more traditional camera in there which he used when the 'lens' was uncapped, through which to shoot the actual picture, which the Mammoth was later used to enlarge? Also, if you look closely you can make out another comparatively smaller camera, sitting on the trestle in front of the Mammoth. Why was that there?

My own obsession about finding remains of the camera has led to enquiries to various publications and historical societies in and around Chicago. The only result that I've had was from a man who claimed he knew that the Mammoth resided in the National Trust Farm Shed Museum at Kadina in South Australia.

After a lot of digging I located a librarian in the town who went to the museum and took pictures of it for me. It was a big camera, but nothing like, or anywhere near as enormous as, the Mammoth.

The camera, as you see it here, definitely existed. But did it do what it was claimed to have done, and what became of it? The research goes on. AP

Picture from *The Largest Photograph in the World of the Handsomest Train in the World*, a pamphlet distributed in 1901 by PS Eustis, General Passenger Agent, 209 Adams Street, Chicago.

John Wade is best known for his regular contributions to AP on classic cameras. He is the author of 25 books on social and photographic history. Find him at **www.johnwade.org**

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